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THE AMUSEMENTS OF
OLD LONDON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME THE SECOND



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THE AMUSEMENTS OF OLD LONDON

BEING A SURVEY OF THE SPORTS AND PASTIMES
TEA GARDENS AND PARKS, PLAYHOUSES
AND OTHER DIVERSIONS OF THE PEOPLE
OF LONDON FROM THE 17TH TO
THE BEGINNING OF THE
19TH CENTURY

BY WILLIAM B. BOULTON

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CONTEMPORARY
SOURCES, ALL COLOURED BY HAND

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME THE SECOND

LONDON

JOHN C. NIMMO

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Southwark Fair, 1733 *To face page 48*

Drawn by WILLIAM HOGARTH.

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AMUSEMENTS OF OLD LONDON

CHAPTER VII

LONDON AL FRESCO: VAUXHALL

WE wrote in another chapter of the fondness of the Londoner of former times for taking his solace in the open air, of his habit of junketing under trees and in arbours, and of taking his modest refreshment in the scores of pleasant places which the enterprise of individuals placed at his disposal in almost every quarter of the town. We saw the tradition of the London *al fresco* in its origin at the Spring Garden at Whitehall, and followed it through most of the pleasant shades which made Islington and Clerkenwell, Marylebone, Brompton, Chelsea and Lambeth places of modest delight for successive generations of cockneys. In so doing, we suggested that the tradition of the open air entertainment in London, at one moment in great danger of losing its continuity, was supported by an institution on the banks of the river near Lambeth, where eventually it pros-

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pered and developed until it made of its new resting-place the crown and glory of the whole cult. It was at the New Spring Garden at Vauxhall, as we hinted, that the tea garden of London attained its zenith and offered to the man and woman of fashion and breeding an entertainment more suited to their tastes than the diversions provided for their humbler fellow-citizens on a generous scale elsewhere. The story of the famous gardens of Vauxhall we held to be a theme worthy of a separate consideration, and we now propose to complete our inquiry into the history of the departed joys of the London *al fresco*, by seeking to revive for a moment its final glories at a spot which is to-day, perhaps, as little redolent of groves and nightingales and whispering lovers as any in London. For it was in that unpromising district just north and east of the grimy railway station which still perpetuates the name, that Vauxhall Gardens spread their delights to an appreciative town, delights of which you may read in terms almost of ecstasy in the pages of a score of reputable authors of the times and of a hundred less notable scribes.

It was, as we have said, in the year when the needy Court of Charles the Second began to cover up the pleasant lawns of the Spring Garden at Charing Cross with the buildings which have kept the name alive into our own times, that the London *al fresco* entertainment was in some danger of extinction. The numerous smaller tea gardens which we have examined elsewhere had not yet arisen, and the Mul-

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berry Garden at Buckingham House, never destined to a long career, was the single open air entertainment available to Londoners near the town. There had, however, long been traditions of merry-makings of a modest nature at a spot which was then open country, standing back from the river just behind the southern end of the present Albert Embankment, where it joins Upper Kennington Lane. As early as 1663 foreign travellers in England had noticed a modest pleasure garden at Lambeth as a feature of English life worth recording. Balthazar Monconys speaks of the place as "lawns and gravel walks dividing squares of twenty to thirty yards enclosed with hedges of gooseberry trees within which were planted roses." It is interesting to see that he calls this pleasaunce the "Jardin Printemps," a curious echo of the name of King Charles's Spring Garden at Charing Cross.

Later, when the days of the Restoration came, there is frequent mention of the place by Evelyn and Pepys. Careful antiquaries indeed like Mr. Warwick Wroth will detect record of two gardens side by side at Lambeth, the new and the old Spring Gardens. But we need not here assume the functions of those invaluable historians of a London which would be forgotten in many of its most interesting aspects but for their labours of love. It is enough for our purpose that we can find record of a pleasant garden up the river in those early times, where, as we have said, we can watch the tradition of the London

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al fresco taking shelter and reaching its highest development.

Here was Mr. Evelyn, for example, going up to inquire in 1661, when he found the "New Spring Garden at Lambeth a pretty contrived plantation," and we may follow the fortunes of the place in a score of pleasant allusions from his day until those of Addison and Dick Steele. The founders of the place have left no trace of their personalities, and it is not until nearly a century after the first mention of Spring Garden at Lambeth that the true genius of the place, Mr. Jonathan Tyers, by his enterprise and ability established the Spring Garden at Vauxhall as the model of all places of the sort in Europe. But some of the notable men of the early days who enjoyed the pleasures upon which the later glories of the place were reared, have left us much comment on the doings within its boundaries, and with their help there is slight difficulty in repeopling its shades and arbours.

The accident of the identity of its name with that of the famous and modish royal garden at Whitehall was doubtless of some advantage to the New Spring Garden at Vauxhall. Vauxhall, we may remark, took its name from a manor of South Lambeth named after Fulke de Breauté, the henchman of King John, who built a house there, called successively Fulke's Hall, Faukeshall, Foxhall, Vauxhall. The name of Spring Garden was likely to attract much of the company of the place at Charing

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Cross which had been displaced by the building schemes of his Majesty and the closing of the garden. The gardens had also another indubitable advantage in their situation near the banks of the river. When we consider the state of the roads in and near London until quite modern times, and recall the fact that until 1750 there was no bridge over the Thames between London Bridge and Kingston, we can appreciate the value of the river as a highway, and the help it brought to any place of entertainment near its banks. The fares on the Thames were extraordinarily moderate. There are regulations of the Corporation extant which tell us that the citizen wishing to go to Vauxhall by water could take a pair-oared wherry at Whitehall for sixpence, or if he was content with sculls for half that moderate fee. Then the journey by water was itself an attraction which brought advantages to the gardens. The place was in the country, and a visit in the heat of summer was something in the nature of an expedition to the substantial merchant from the city and his family. They were apt to stay longer and eat more after the little voyage, in which their appetites were sharpened by the fresh air of the river. The modest charges of the journey were as nothing to the class of patrons which made Vauxhall their own; they may, indeed, have been an advantage in acting as a kind of filter which excluded some of the rougher elements from the place. It is certain, in any case, that the Spring Gardens at Vauxhall from the first

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took a tone which distinguished them from the rest of such places in London; and this air of fashion Vauxhall retained until quite the closing days of its career of two centuries. Its glories were sadly dimmed before the end came, it is true, but at its lowest it always stood a little above the level of the competitors and imitators of its decline.

There is copious allusion to the early times of these famous gardens, as we say—allusion historical and literary, and over much of it is the right flavour of the Restoration. The humours of Spring Gardens at Charing Cross were removed to Spring Gardens at Vauxhall, with little maiming of their rites; there are the same rumours of syllabubs and cheesecakes, the same wandering of damsels through the close walks of the wilderness, the same whispering of gallants in love-locks to ladies in masks and flame-coloured gowns. Spring Gardens appear in the pages of Wycherley and Congreve, and Vanbrugh and Sedley, as a spot upon which much of the glitter and revelry of that reckless society, lately released from the bondage of the Puritans, displayed itself to the best advantage. The historical evidence of Mr. Samuel Pepys, too, is to the same effect. Samuel was there often, and in many moods; with the maids, with his wife, and without his wife but with other people's at times. The vice of the age, as exhibited by the company in the gardens, would shock him one day, and on another he would kiss Knipp in the arbour, "it being darkish." But that

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quaint sinner can speak best for himself. "Thence to the new one," he says in May of 1662, speaking of the Old and New Spring Gardens, "where I never was before, which much exceeds the other; and here we also walked, and the boy crept through the hedge, and gathered abundance of roses, and, after a long walk, passed out of the doors, as we did at the other place." Those were quite early days, both of the Restoration and of Samuel's prosperity and importance. He affected the place later very frequently, and favours us with more particulars, both of the gardens and the company.

In 1665, for example, there is local colour in the record of another visit "By water to Foxhall, and there walked an hour alone, observing the several humours of the citizens . . . pulling off cherries and God knows what." Two years later there was "A great deal of company, and the weather and garden pleasant, and it is very pleasant and cheap going thither, for a man may go to spend what he will or nothing—all is one; but to hear the nightingale and other birds, and here fiddles, and there a harp, and here a Jew's trump, and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty divertising." We think Samuel's delight in the innocent pleasures of Vauxhall, after the dark days of the Puritans and the Plague and the Fire, with his new prosperity growing upon him, is very human. And if inscription were wanted for the cenotaph of the departed joys of the London *al fresco*, what better words

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could be found than Pepys' elegy of the nightingale and the Jew's trump?

But for the true aspect of the Vauxhall of the Restoration, we must wait another year. Pepys left record of three visits to Vauxhall in the summer of 1668, all within a few weeks, by which time he was a man of mark, noticed by the king and the Duke of York, and with a comfortable sum of money, still growing, in his chest at Axe Yard. He had little scruple about the company he kept, but much as to that in which he was seen. His growing riches, too, often gave him qualms when he thought of the chances of the continuance of the circumstances in which he was piling them up; every excess of that reckless society gave him a shiver. Many of the thoughts which constantly tormented the active brain of the busy Samuel in those uneasy days find expression in the records of his visits to the Spring Garden at Vauxhall in 1668, and certainly the humours of the Restoration are there very perfectly reflected. Listen to him.

“Walked and saw young Newport, and two more rogues of the town, seize on two ladies, who walked with them an hour with their masks on (perhaps civil ladies).” Again: “Over the water with my wife and Deb and Mercer to Spring Garden, and there eat and walked; and observed how rude some of the young gallants of the town are become, to go into people's arbours where there are not men, and almost force the women, which troubled me to see

the confidence of the vice of the age." Once more: "Over to Foxhall, and there fell into the company of Harry Killigrew, a rogue newly come back out of France, but still in disgrace at our Court, and young Newport and others, as very rogues as any in the town, who were ready to take hold of every woman that come by them. And so to supper in an arbour; but, Lord, their mad talk did make my heart ake."

The rogues must have been rude indeed to have shocked such a connoisseur in the art of dalliance as Mr. Pepys. Samuel little thought that the entries of that wondrous diary would ever be thrown open to the prying curiosity of later generations, that diary which surely of all books in the world has the merit of absolute veracity. Samuel never even deceived himself in those artless pages as to the real nature of his doings at Vauxhall or elsewhere. With his frolics with that long line of beauty from Betty Lane to Deb Willett entered against his account in his own hand he could have had few real qualms about "the confidence and vice of the age." His only trouble was as to how long it might last, with young Harry Killigrew and young Newport and the other "very rogues about town" going the pace as they were. Surely Samuel is the only man who ever made a clean breast of it, and the only human sinner whose reputation was ever established by the ordinarily disastrous process of being found out.

You may trace, as we say, the accuracy of Mr. Pepys' observations of the pleasantries of the early

Spring Gardens through the pages of the dramatists of the Restoration, how the Hippolytas and Prues, Thisbes and Mrs. Fancifuls, the flame-coloured petticoats, and the other figures of those joyous times regarded the conveniences of its pleasant arbours. Its pleasures and its vices were no better and no worse than the other places of public resort of the times, and at Vauxhall as elsewhere the flame of riot and revelry of those reckless days blazed up and burnt away.

In the stormy days which followed those feverish pleasures of the Restoration, England, and London especially, had more serious matters to think and write about than the pleasures of the town at Vauxhall. There were Stuart kings to get rid of, bishops to acquit, papists to be packed off bag and baggage, a new Protestant king to be brought over from Holland, and a whole line of Protestant successors to be secured for the English throne by an Act of Settlement. It is not strange, therefore, to find little mention of our garden up the river in the annals of those days, though we know that it still opened its gates to the subjects of King William as it had done to those of Charles and James, with pleasures a little chastened no doubt, to suit the more serious spirit of the times. The whole place was for sale, apparently, in 1694, and any one wishing to know all particulars could have them by inquiring of "Mrs. Eliz. Plant at Foxhall, near the Garden," as we learn from the *London Gazette*, and the sale included "the Great Spring

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Garden, commonly called the New Spring Garden at Foxhall, with several acres of land and houses." Whether they were sold we do not know, and whether Mrs. Eliz. Plant was one of the early proprietors to whom pleasure-loving London owed so much, is also a matter of surmise. It is certain that the amenities of the place were still provided for such as chose to enjoy them, and that by the time England began to settle down under Queen Anne the fame of the gardens at Vauxhall, as one of the attractions of the town, had in no way diminished since the delights recorded by Mr. Pepys.

In the last year of the seventeenth century we learn from Mr. Tom Brown, the facetious historian of many of the diversions of those times, that "the ladies have an inclination to take delight in the close walks of Spring Garden, where both sexes meet and mutually serve one another as guides to lose their way, and the windings and turnings in the little wildernesses are so intricate," adds Mr. Brown slyly, "that the most experienced mothers have often lost themselves in looking for their daughters." There is still, we observe, the old tradition of the whispering lover about Vauxhall, the attraction of the dark walks and shady groves, which drew successive generations of youths and maidens to the place until their discreet reticence disappeared a century later in a blaze of vulgar fireworks. Doctor Swift, we find, took Lady Kerry and Miss Pratt to hear the nightingales a little later, and Mr. Thoresby, of the Diary, was "surprised

with so many pleasant walks so near London," in the Vauxhall of 1714.

It is in such allusions as these that we trace the London *al fresco* through those early days, days during which its trees grew, and the habits of its patrons formed themselves in a manner which made it easy for the managers of the palmy days which were to come to fill the groves of one with continuous and delighted crowds of the other. It happens that the rather scanty annals of the Vauxhall of the days of Anne were enriched by an essay on the beauties of the place and the aspect of its company, which are as convincing as the vivid pages of Mr. Pepys himself. No less a light of those times than Mr. Addison devoted a day and a whole *Spectator* to a visit to Vauxhall. It has been often quoted, but in these days when *Spectators* and *Tailors* and *Guardians* we suspect are little read as a whole, we make no apology for recalling the *Spectator's* visit to Vauxhall with Sir Roger de Coverley on the evening of May 20, 1712.

We all know, or we ought to know, that famous description of the journey by water to Vauxhall. There is the crowd of importunate watermen at the Temple stairs, from whom the knight picks out one with a wooden leg as a reward for the loss of the limb at La Hogue. We see the short-faced *Spectator* taking his seat, and Sir Roger trimming the boat with his coachman, "who, being a sober man, always served for ballast on these occasions." We see the old man turning about, as the boat swings out into the stream

in the evening light, to take a survey of the great metropolis, and make "several reflections on the greatness of the British nation; as that one Englishman could beat three Frenchmen, that the Thames was the noblest river in Europe, and that London Bridge was a greater piece of work than any of the seven wonders of the world." The badinage of the river is received by the knight in exchange for his kindly good-morrow, and he regrets that he is not in the commission for Middlesex in order to teach "such vagrants that her Majesty's subjects were no more to be abused by water than by land."

"We were now arrived at Spring Garden," continues the Spectator, "which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of the year. When I considered the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sung upon the trees, and the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades, I could not but look upon the place as a kind of Mahometan paradise." The singing of the birds reminded Sir Roger of the nightingale coppice at Coverley Hall, and he fell a-musing on the widow, the widow who had "certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world," "when a mask who came behind him gave him a gentle tap on the shoulder, and asked him if he would drink a bottle of mead with her. But the knight, being startled at so unexpected a familiarity . . . told her she was a wanton baggage, and bid her go about her business." There is allusion to the modest refreshment of the place in the record

of the glass of Burton ale and slice of hung beef which the *Spectator* and the knight took together, the famous animadversion of Sir Roger to the lady at the bar about the paucity of nightingales and the plenty of wanton baggages, and we are certain that Mr. Addison's picture of the Spring Garden at Vauxhall in the days of Queen Anne will not be improved by a single touch of our own.

A great silence fell over Vauxhall after the days of the *Spectator*, a silence which hushed all report of its doings, and remained unbroken until the first year of the reign of the second George, when one of those geniuses who took the amusements of Londoners into their keeping arose and did for Vauxhall what Heidegger did for the masquerade, or Francis White for the clubs, or Astley for the circus. Historians of London find no record of Vauxhall and its pleasures for fourteen years, with the single exception of its mention as one of the sights of the town in the "New Guide to London" of 1726. But the *al fresco* entertainment in which we are interested was by that time out of danger, and was providing London, as we know, with a score of tea gardens in the most pleasant spots of the town and its suburbs. Mr. Wroth thinks that the place had somewhat declined in the interval of silence, that the attractions had become stale and scanty, and its management lax. So much was hinted later when a grateful London took to praising Mr. Jonathan Tyers for his enterprise,—Mr. Tyers, who took a lease of the place from Mrs. Elizabeth Masters

in 1728, who eventually acquired the freehold of the original gardens and of some additional acres, and who was the real author of the famous Vauxhall Gardens of George the Second and George the Third, the Vauxhall of Fielding and Smollett, of Horace Walpole, of Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson, of the Duchess of Devonshire and the Prince of Wales.

Tyers was in no hurry, as it would seem, to force the attractions of his place upon the town. He obtained his lease in 1728, as we say, and for no less than four years he continued to crouch, as it were, for a final spring in 1732. The place was doubtless open during those years, but one reads nothing of it, and there is little doubt that Jonathan saved the greatest of his efforts for the season of 1732, when he made a bid for the patronage of the great by his famous *Ridotto al fresco* of that year.

The idea itself was almost of the nature of an inspiration, the idea of removing the masquerade, which was providing Heidegger with a fortune at the Haymarket, from the hot rooms of the opera-house to the cool shades of Vauxhall in the balmy surroundings of the evening of an English June. The company did not meet till between the hours of nine and eleven, so all the garishness which sunlight was calculated to shed upon mask and domino was avoided, and the mystery which was a necessary part of those joyous functions was happily preserved. It requires little imagination to recall the famous *Ridotto al fresco* of 1732; the river still without bridges, boat-loads of happy people

in fancy dress going up stream, as the evening closed in, in boats preceded by others playing music, the lights of the flotilla and the fancy dresses and the music giving a touch of Venetian gaiety to the lovely but sober reaches of the Thames. There were some hundreds only of the *élite* of London Society admitted to this *fête*, as we are told, and Prince Frederick, Prince of Wales, came down the river in his barge from Kew. The night was fine, and they kept it up till the birds sang and the daylight came at four o'clock the next morning. There was some little excitement when a pickpocket was detected in the act of taking the purse of one of the company with fifty guineas, and comic relief was not wanting when a tipsy waiter reeled in among the fine ladies in an improvised fancy dress.

Such was the opening ceremony of the famous Tyers management of Vauxhall Gardens, which established their vogue and made of them the most famous open air entertainment in Europe during a century. Of the details of that management there is no lack; after 1732 we are on firm ground, and the difficulty is not one of the collection of information but of its sifting and selection. For there is a chorus of praise chiefly, but of comment and criticism also, on the attractions of Vauxhall from the days of Horace Walpole to those of Thackeray and Albert Smith.

There survives a tradition that the first years of Mr. Tyers at Spring Gardens were not unclouded with anxiety. He was meditating, indeed, if we are to

believe that tradition, on the easiest way out of the troubles by which he was beset, and had arrived at a consideration of the respective merits of hanging and drowning. While in this mood he happened to meet Mr. Hogarth the painter, who had lodgings near the gardens for the summer. Mr. Tyers imparted his griefs to the painter, and Mr. Hogarth bade him be of good cheer and call at his studio later in the day for a discussion of the business. The conference which followed is said to have led to a suggestion which resulted in the production of the *Ridotto al fresco*, which founded the fortunes of the place and of Mr. Tyers. The legend is difficult to confirm or refute, nor is it a matter of great importance. Mr. Hogarth was undoubtedly associated with the place; he certainly painted one decorative picture for the embellishment of one of Mr. Tyers' saloons himself, and he allowed Francis Hayman to copy another for the same purpose. He also designed those delightful little season tickets in silver or bronze, which are now eagerly sought by collectors of the memorials of past times in London; little tokens delicately wrought in ovals, or of a lozenge shape, with borders in the rococo style, and hinting at the pleasures of the gardens by pretty reliefs of nymphs, in classical attire, reclining gracefully in the shade of its groves, or Amphion twanging his harp on the dolphin's back. Mr. Hogarth himself received a life ticket in gold to admit "a coachful," and inscribed with the legend, *in perpetuam beneficii memoriam*. This identical token recently brought the amazing

price of £310 by auction at Sotheby's, and its existence may, or may not, be accepted as a confirmation of the Hogarth legend to which we have alluded.

It is not difficult to reconstruct the pleasure which Mr. Tyers prepared for his patrons, for many of the scribes of the next half-century recorded its delights, and not a few of the capable artists of those times transferred its beauties to the copper plate. The place was a parallelogram, and its main features were groves of trees which eventually assumed the dignity of forest timber, intersected by gravel walks crossing each other at right angles. It was entered by a gateway through an ordinary-looking house of brick of three storeys, which with a high brick wall enclosed the gardens on the western side bounded by Kennington lane. On the three other sides its borders were the hayfields of the open country. As you entered the place from the gateway through the manager's house you looked up the Grand Walk, planted with a stately avenue of elms, and extending the whole length of the demesne. Parallel to the Grand Walk on the right hand ran the South Walk, an avenue of much the same length and dimensions, which was crossed by three triumphal arches of a rather debased Renaissance design. A third avenue, the Grand Cross Walk, ran across the whole garden at right angles to the two avenues we have named. On the right the Grand Cross Walk gave access to the Dark Walks, the Druids' Walk, or the Lovers' Walk,

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the secluded alleys of Vauxhall which gave the place much of its fame and not a little of its attractions for some of its patrons. On the left the Grand Cross Walk led to the Wildernesses and Rural Downs, more open shrubbery-like spaces which afforded a view of the country towards the river. The whole place covered about twelve acres, and you may trace its general plan quite perfectly in the excellent bird's-eye view drawn by Mr. Wale in 1751.

It was thus that Mr. Tyers prepared a loafing-place for half a century of the social life of London; he spared neither time nor money nor ingenuity on its attractions, and he had his reward in a long popularity. He placed at the end of his two grand walks representations of the ruins of Palmyra, and colossal statues, which by concealing its boundaries added to the apparent size of the place. He employed sculptors of ability to carve him statues in marble; one of Mr. Handel, whose music was often heard in the gardens, was much admired, and is yet in the possession of Mr. Alfred Lyttleton. Milton in lead sat blind and forlorn in the rural downs, and representations of Apollo gave an air of classic taste to his groves. He dug out caves in his wildernesses, where he buried his musicians, from whose fiddles arose mysterious music in the solitudes known as the Musical Bushes, until, as he announced, he was obliged to abandon that ingenious attraction, "the natural damp of the earth being found prejudicial to the instruments." He built a fine orchestra in what he called his Grove, a

space of nearly five acres near the entrance on the right, where bands of the ablest musicians in London played good music in most imposing cocked hats, and tenors and prima donnas trilled and quavered for half a century.

The Grove was the square enclosed by the Grand and South Walks, and by the Cross Walk and the western wall of the gardens, and it was the centre of the buildings of Vauxhall which came to be as famous as its groves and arbours. Round and about the Grove were clustered the temples, the pavilions, the rotundas, the great rooms, the music rooms, the picture rooms, the covered colonnades for wet weather, above all the famous supper boxes built in straight rows or curving sweeps. In those famous supper boxes, where generations of Londoners ate the noted Vauxhall chicken and ham, were the paintings which gave a quaint interest to each, every picture displayed by its own little oil lamp. There were the "Four Times of the Day," copied by permission from Mr. Hogarth's noted compositions of the same title, and the varied productions of Mr. Francis Hayman and other artists; scenes from Shakespeare and from popular comedies; representations of the favourite sports of the people—the Play of See-saw, the Play of Cricket, Leap-Frog, Sliding on the Ice, milkmaids dancing round the Maypole, Phyllis and Corydon, pipe and tabor, sheep and shepherds and shepherdesses and what not. Mr. Hogarth himself painted a picture for one of the larger saloons, of Henry the

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Eighth and Anne Boleyn; and in his blunt way, it is said, pointed to a famous scandal of the day by painting Henry with the face of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Lady Archibald Hamilton as Anne Boleyn. Above all, Mr. Tyers lighted up the darkness of his groves "with above a thousand lamps so disposed that they all took fire together, with such a sudden blaze as was perfectly surprising."

It was that same lighting of the groves which formed one of the chief attractions of Vauxhall and captivated all beholders for half a century. There is a continual rhapsody on the lamps at Vauxhall by generations of writers, and a blaze of artificial light seen through a foreground of overhanging trees at Vauxhall provided a subject for a succession of artists, who produced those delightful vignettes on copper for its programmes and song sheets, where the beauties of the place are best preserved. The illuminations of Vauxhall were undoubtedly arranged with much taste, and the sudden lighting of the lamps, with a simultaneous crash of music from the orchestra, had a considerable effect. Moreover, the illuminations of Vauxhall gained greatly by contrast with the aspect of the town of that day. Long after the general use of gas, London after night-fall was a dull and gloomy place. The streets were generally narrow and ill lighted, and quite without the blaze of light to which we are accustomed from the modern shop window. Even at the theatres, the stage effects, with which this century is familiar, were unknown, and Vauxhall was really the only place

where the citizen could see anything of the beauty of artificial light intelligently employed. Modern caterers are fully aware of the value of a judicious investment in gas and white paint, and there is little wonder at the success of the efforts of Mr. Tyers and his successors to produce "a rich blaze of radiance" by their coloured lamps and chandeliers and illuminated stars and revolving mirrors in an age when the ordinary surroundings of the Londoner gave them so much help by their contrast.

Mr. Tyers also lost nothing by any lack of enterprise in his methods of advertising the place. Grub Street was eloquent about the joys of Vauxhall, the fashion of its patrons, the beauty of its groves, the chaste sobriety of its solitudes where, as we learn, "even bishops have been seen without injuring their character." "The whole place," says another scribe, "is a realisation of Elizium." Gazetteers descanted on the surprising fashion of the company to be met in its walks, which were "often honoured with some of the Royal family, who are here entertained with the sweet song of numbers of nightingales in concert with the best band of musick in England." Frederick Prince of Wales really did haunt the garden a good deal, would command songs which were favourites of his Royal Highness, and allowed Mr. Tyers to dedicate a pavilion to him, which was duly surmounted with the royal plumes. The minor poets, too, often broke into song about the beauties of Vauxhall, as when one of those tuneful gentlemen described the impressions

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of Farmer Colin from the country, after a visit to Lambeth :—

“ O Mary ! soft in feature,
I've been at dear Vauxhall ;
No paradise is sweeter,
Not that they Eden call.

Methought when first I entered,
Such splendours round me shone ;
Into a world I entered,
Where rose another sun.

While music never cloying,
As skylarks sweet I hear ;
The sounds I'm still enjoying,
They'll always soothe my ear.”

You may read reams of verses like these if you have time and inclination to explore the collections of the fugitive literature of George the Second and George the Third. We probably do no great injustice to Mr. Tyers in surmising that a great deal of such poetry drew as much inspiration from his strong box as from the charms of his gardens.

Tyers was more original, perhaps, in one other of his methods of advertising. He was accustomed to dress up presentable agents of both sexes in the height of fashion, and to send them to mix with the assemblies of great people who took the air in the park or in the Mall at St. James's. These “ decoy ducks,” as they came to be called, met at such places as if by accident, remarked on the beauty of the weather in tones audible to bystanders, and supposed that they

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would have the pleasure of meeting each other later at Vauxhall. By these devices, and the general enterprise of his management, the astute manager contrived to make his gardens the summer playground of London society for half a century, and a history of Vauxhall during the Tyers management is a history of one phase of that society itself.

That was a typical evening at Vauxhall on the 23rd June, 1750, when Lady Caroline Petersham arranged a party and sent Mr. Horace Walpole a card. We see in our chapter on the parks how Lady Caroline beat the Mall for recruits on that occasion, and enlisted such lights of the society of that day as the Duke of Kingston, Lord March, "a pretty Miss Beauclerc and a very foolish Miss Sparre, little Miss Ashe and Mr. Whitehed." "The ladies," says Horace, "were as handsome as crimson could make them, having just finished their last layer of red." They took the water at Whitehall Stairs and rowed up the river, with the customary boat of French horns as a vanguard, Miss Ashe lending the additional charm of her voice. At Vauxhall Stairs they picked up Lord Granby, who had just come from the joys of duck hunting at Jenny's Whim at Chelsea, and was deplorably drunk, as Horace unkindly records. This was the heroic Granby of Minden, whose head was on half the inn signboards in England for the next half century. "At last," says Walpole, "we assembled in our booth, Lady Caroline in front, with the visor of

her hat erect and looking gloriously jolly and handsome. She had fetched my brother Orford from the next box, where he was enjoying himself with his *petite partie*, to help us to mince chickens. We minced seven chickens into a china dish, which Lady Caroline stewed over a lamp with three pats of butter and a flagon of water, stirring and rattling and laughing, and we every minute expecting the dish to fly about our ears." The mixture does not sound appetising, but they seem to have made a meal of it. Lady Caroline had brought Betty the fruit girl from St. James's Street with hampers of strawberries, who waited on these great people, and was honoured by being allowed to sup at a little table of her own by their side. You may follow if you like the conversation of the party of social celebrities in Walpole's gossiping pages. A Mr. O'Brien, a fortune-hunting Irishman, had lately arrived from Ireland, too late, however, to claim the Duchess of Manchester from Mr. Hussey. "I took up the biggest hautboy in the dish," says Walpole, "and said to Lady Caroline, 'Madam, Miss Ashe desires you would eat this O'Brien strawberry;' she replied immediately, 'I won't, you hussey.'" And who shall say that wit and repartee were dead in June of 1753? "In short," says Horace, "the whole air of our party was sufficient, as you will easily imagine, to take up the whole attention of the garden; so much so that from eleven o'clock till half-an-hour after one we had the whole concourse round our booth. At last

they came into the little gardens of each booth on the side of ours, till Harry Vane took up a bumper and drank their healths, and was proceeding to treat them with still greater freedoms." The party got home, as we learn, at three o'clock in the morning, and the entertainment was in every way typical of a fashionable party at Vauxhall during the prosperous days of Mr. Tyers' management.

Those same viands of Vauxhall chicken and ham had a reputation which was as renowned as the lamps and the groves of the gardens; the chickens for their smallness, the slices of ham for a thinness past belief. There was much humorous comment on the eatables at Vauxhall from the beginning of Mr. Tyers' management to the days of Thackeray, who speaks of "the twinkling boxes in which the happy feasters made believe to eat almost invisible slices of ham." The old citizen of the *Connoisseur* of 1755, Mr. Rose, found the chickens no bigger than a sparrow, and estimated his mouthfuls at groats and three-penny pieces; you may still see him in a delightful little copper-plate engraving which illustrated that periodical, holding up a reproachful forkful of ham at the waiter. It was contended that a famous carver of the gardens obtained and held a lucrative situation by his proved ability to cover the whole twelve acres of the premises with slices from a single joint. It was unsafe, as was asserted, to carry a plateful from one table to another, the slices being subject to abduction by the zephyrs of the groves.

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Constant patrons of the gardens also declared that you could read the *Postboy* or the *Chronicle* with perfect ease through the transparent medium of the delicate Vauxhall ham.

During the height of their vogue there was a certain etiquette at the gardens; ladies came in full evening dress, and the men walked bareheaded, with their hats under their arms. A stately promenade of the main walks of the garden was usually a function which began the delights of the evening for the more fashionable of the company. Then followed the concert, invariably composed of sixteen pieces; songs alternating with instrumental performances—the songs of a very sentimental cast—the sonatas and symphonies for the band being often of a higher musical quality. Tyers, however, engaged the finest voices of his day to warble the tender ballads for which the place was famous; and men like Thomas Lowe and Vernon, and lady singers like Mrs. Arne, Miss Stevenson, Miss Wright, Mrs. Baddeley, and Mrs. Weichsell, no doubt supplied the charm which the songs themselves—all about Strephon and Delia and Cupid—seem to lack to-day. There were set spectacles, like watermills and tin cascades, for those who preferred them to music, and great opportunities for ogling on a grand scale for the younger members of Mr. Tyers' patrons. "A young lady, who was at Vauxhall on Thursday night last in company with two gentlemen," says an advertisement in the *London Chronicle* for August 5th, 1758, "could not but observe a young

gentleman in blue and gold-laced hat, who, being near her by the orchestra during the performance, especially the last song, gazed upon her with the utmost attention. He earnestly hopes (if unmarried) she will favour him with a line, directed to A. D. at the bar of the Temple Exchange Coffee-house, Temple Bar, to inform him whether fortune, family, and character may not entitle him upon a further knowledge to hope an interest in her heart." Who does not wish a happy ending to the sighs of this modest young gentleman in blue and the gold-laced hat, his oglings of the fair restrained within prudent limits by the presence of the two other gentlemen, but still culminating in a killing effort during the last song, and fully expressed later in the accommodating columns of the *London Chronicle*?

The other famous attraction of Vauxhall was provided by the romantic qualities which generations of young people found in Mr. Tyers' dark walks. Frisky maidens from the city delighted in braving the dangers of those solitudes, and there were not wanting gallant youths who provided the necessary excitement. It was the destiny of most of the famous heroines of fiction, from Amelia to Evelina, to meet with adventures in the recesses of Mr. Tyers' famous solitudes; readers of Fielding will remember how Amelia fared at the hands of Jane and my lord before the arrival of Booth and Captain Trench; and the meeting of Evelina and Sir Clement Willoughby, and the declaration of love which followed,

is surely an everlasting model for all ladies who write love scenes between prim maidens and impetuous lovers.

The dark walks of Vauxhall had quite naturally different aspects for different minds. There was an innocent gentleman, for example, who wrote a description of Vauxhall which was very popular and several times reprinted during the last century, who pointed out its beauties for minds of a contemplative cast. "It is very agreeable," he says, "to all whose minds are adapted to contemplation and scenes devoted to solitude, and the votaries that court her shrine, and it must be confessed that there is something in the amiable simplicity of unadorned nature that spreads over the mind a more noble sort of tranquillity, and a greater sensation of pleasure than can be received from the nicer scenes of art.

‘How simple nature’s hand with noble grace,
Diffuses artless beauties o’er the place.’

This walk in the evening is dark, which renders it more agreeable to those minds who love to enjoy the full scope of imagination, to listen to the orchestra and view the lamps glittering through the trees."

We take this good gentleman to have been one of Mr. Tyers' literary men, because there is much critical matter affecting the reputation of the chaste solitudes which he describes which issued from other pens almost at the same moment. We read of "loose persons of both sexes," who frequented the dark

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[illegible]

10. The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various committees of the Board of Directors:

it is true, there is record during the whole of the Tyers' management, were exceptional, and that the main features of the entertainment of Vauxhall for half a century were distinguished by a decorum which was uncommon at similar places of amusement about the town. It is quite certain that Tyers found patrons among the chief men of his day in most walks of life. We think of the great figures of those times, each in its particular environment: Johnson and Goldsmith in their modest lodgings off the Strand; Sir Joshua at the painting-room in Leicester Fields; Garrick at Drury Lane or the Adelphi; Fox and Fitzpatrick at Brooks's or the House of Commons; the wild Prince of Wales and the Duke of York chafing under the parental curb at the Queen's House at St. James's; any or all of the great ladies of society, from the "beautiful Molly Lepel" to the Duchess of Devonshire and Mrs. Crewe, and Lady Elizabeth Foster, in their great town houses or great country mansions—but we may think of them all with the greatest historical propriety at Vauxhall. Those gardens at Lambeth were a kind of social exchange, where Londoners of all ranks could and did meet for half a century, and partook together of Mr. Tyers' harmless entertainments. Vauxhall was, in fact, the only place of its kind in Europe, during a century, which saw nearly every capital except London devastated at one time or other by the occupation of hostile armies. Certain it is that whole generations of Londoners revelled in its delights, and have left blessings upon its

memory, and Vauxhall was either a very pleasant place, or else the town of George the Third was much more easily amused than the town of to-day. "That excellent place of amusement," said Dr. Johnson, "must ever be an estate to its proprietor, as it is peculiarly adapted to the taste of the English nation, there being a mixture of curious show, gay exhibition, music, vocal and instrumental, not too refined for the general ear, for all which only a shilling is paid, and though last, not least, good eating and drinking for those who choose to purchase that regale." Goldsmith delighted in the place, and his description of the company and the pleasures of Vauxhall in the "Citizen of the World"—of Mrs. Tibbs and the pawnbroker's widow, of the shabby beau and the man in black, and the raptures of the Chinese philosopher—is almost as much a classic of our literature as Mr. Addison's essay of half a century before. The great people went, and it followed, as a matter of course, that lesser people followed to gaze at them. Vauxhall was the place where any one aspiring to the notice of the fashion of the day was obliged to appear at proper intervals: the rising actor, the poet looking out for a patron who was good for twenty guineas for a dedication, the parson wanting preferment. Famous toasts of the town displayed their beauties in its walks; the fascinating Miss Chudleigh, who was a maid of honour and Countess of Bristol and Duchess of Kingston almost at one and the same moment, was very fond of its promenade; and Horace Walpole will

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tell you how the incomparable Miss Gunnings were so mobbed by a crowd of eager admirers of their beauty that they had incontinently to retreat. The periodical unbending of a proud society in public, which appeared to perfection in Walpole's account of his famous party, was no doubt much appreciated by the ordinary citizen, and Vauxhall was almost the only place where he could enjoy occasional contact with great people in such propitious moods. There is a pleasant flavour about many of the anecdotes of Vauxhall which are recorded in the light literature of the last century. It must have been pretty to hear Lord Sandwich and his party, which included the mellifluous Miss Rae no doubt, tuning up after supper, and starting a glee from their box, to the delight of the bystanders. General Haile, in the next box, moved by his lordship's example, prevailed on a young lady who accompanied him to sing a solo, "which the band obligingly accompanied, to the delight of the audience." The ordinary citizen, we should imagine, usually got his shilling's worth, quite apart from the entertainments provided by Mr. Tyers. A little excitement was occasionally provided by a row between well-known men about town like Parson Bate and the ruffian Fighting Fitzgerald, or when Captain Allen and Mr. Kelly called each other rascal and scoundrel, drew their swords, and provided the pamphleteers with a subject for a month's writing.

In the later days the attractions of Vauxhall were not diminished by the chance of meeting the handsome

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young George Prince of Wales, who would break out of the windows at St. James's and appear suddenly at midnight in more or less of disguise with Hanger, or Barrymore, or Lake, or St. Leger, or it may be Mr. Charles Fox, if he were not engaged in the House of Commons or at faro at Brooks's. They were very fond of the Prince of Wales at Vauxhall, dedicated pavilions to him, and exhibited his face and figure in transparencies, his Royal Highness leaning against a horse held by Britannia, Minerva bearing his helmet, Providence fixing his spurs, and Fame blowing a trumpet and crowning him with laurel. Then the famous baritone, Mr. Darley, would come to the front of the orchestra and sing the praises of the royal youth—

“Endowed with each virtue the dignified youth,
Ere reason enlightened his mind,
Burst forth on the world in example and truth
The boast and delight of mankind”

—verses which could not have been without humour to all who knew the history of George Prince of Wales in 1791.

“The Prince of Wales was at Vauxhall,” says the *British Magazine* for August of 1782 . . . “but when the music was over, being discovered by the company, he was so surrounded, crushed, pursued, and overcome that he was under the necessity of beating a hasty retreat. The ladies followed the prince; the gentlemen pursued the ladies; the curious ran to see what was the matter; the mischievous ran to increase the

tumult, and in two minutes the boxes were deserted; the lame were overthrown, the well-dressed were demolished, and for half-an-hour the whole company were contracted in one narrow channel and borne along with the rapidity of a torrent, to the infinite danger of powdered locks, painted cheeks, and crazy constitutions."

The great period of Vauxhall Gardens lasted, as we believe, until the year 1791, when the ordinary price of admission of one shilling was doubled by a new management, and a series of entertainments were begun which we shall examine shortly later on, and marked the inevitable period of decline. Jonathan Tyers died in 1767, was succeeded by his son of the same name, and the old traditions of his management lasted until the year we have named. That management, we hold, marked the height of the London *al fresco*, the almost forgotten entertainment which filled so large a place among the pleasures of our ancestors, which it has been our pleasant task to investigate and describe. Vauxhall, as we have seen, was fortunate in many of its historians, and there is a drawing by that admirable artist, Mr. Thomas Rowlandson, well known to connoisseurs by the fine engraving, which preserves for us much of the charm of its prime and the portraits of some of its patrons.

The two beautiful women in the centre of the composition are the Duchess of Devonshire and her sister Lady Duncannon, the upright figure on the left with

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the eyeglass that of Captain Topham, the proprietor and editor of the *World*, an early specimen of the now common "society" paper. Admiral Paisley is the particular hero represented as the veteran with the wooden leg on the duchess's right, and the parson who looks over Lady Duncannon's shoulder is Sir Harry Bate Dudley, the editor of the *Morning Post*, who was more than a match for Fighting Fitzgerald and his bruising footman in the famous Vauxhall Affray. By his side is James Perry, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, a great amateur of the claymore, and therefore represented in Highland costume. On the right of the picture are his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and Perdita Robinson, the latter coyly trifling with her locket, containing Florizel's picture no doubt.

Under the orchestra in the box is Dr. Johnson, with Boswell on his left and Mrs. Thrale on his right, supported by Oliver Goldsmith. Mrs. Weichsell is warbling from the orchestra, and any one interested in the smaller musical matters of the time may recognise among the musicians Barthlemon the leading fiddle, Fisher with his hautboy, and Mr. Hook the conductor, father of the facetious Theodore of the next generation.

Before passing on to the later history of those famous gardens, it may not be inappropriate to take leave of Jonathan Tyers, to whom the pleasure-loving Londoners of his day owed so much. Many years before his death Mr. Tyers had the reward which

attends those who are diligent in business, and retired to the banks of the Mole, at a country place called Denbies. Here he contrived to indulge his old love of gardens and groves, but his efforts were all inspired by a strain of chasteness and morality suited to his years, and suggested perhaps by his experience of the vanities of the world at Vauxhall. The Dark Walk at Vauxhall was represented by "the Valley of the Shadow" at Denbies, which seems to have been one of the sights of the county. "Awful and tremendous the view on the descent into this gloomy vale," writes Mr. Hughson, a visitor evidently much impressed by the solemnity of Mr. Tyers' landscape gardening. "There was a large alcove divided into two compartments, in one of which the unbeliever was represented as dying in great agony; near him were the books which had encouraged him in his libertine course, Hobbes, Tindal, &c. In the other was the Christian, represented in a placid and serene state, prepared for the mansions of the blest." The last glimpse of all of old Tyers is in a rather pathetic paragraph which records that a few days before his death, in 1767, he was carried at his own request and placed in a chair in the middle of the old gardens at Vauxhall, so that he might take a dying glance at the place which had engaged the energies of his prime.

Although there were still nearly seventy years of life, and perhaps half that number of prosperity, in store for Vauxhall, its history after 1791 interests us

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less, as students of the London *al fresco*, than the period we have already examined. The old social features of the gardens are much less in evidence during its later history, the spectacular and the sensational much more. We read in 1792 of grand galas and masquerades, with crowds of haymakers, sweeps, sailors, and punches, and of a company which in no way compared with that of Mr. Tyers' *Ridotto al fresco* of 1732. A few years later were introduced the fireworks, which invariably marked the decline of an open air entertainment in London from the old, simple standards of music and refreshment. The change was, no doubt, inevitable, and fireworks, acrobats, and tight-rope dancers became features of the management so long as the place kept open. The taste of Londoners progressed if it did not improve, and the new views of life and its opportunities, which began to prevail after the Revolution in France, were no longer satisfied with the placid joys which had delighted earlier generations. There are scores of prints and programmes showing the new attractions, and the alterations in the old plan which they entailed. There was a firework platform erected at the eastern end of the grounds, a firework tower, and a mast sixty feet high, from which the "ethereal Saqui" descended on the tight-rope in a blaze of blue flame and Chinese fire. The ethereal Saqui is represented as a very material-looking lady of masculine appearance, dressed in a Roman helmet surmounted by enormous plumes, a tunic of classic cut, and white linen trousers tied round the ankles, like

the typical school-girl of the period of Miss Austen. She descends the tight-rope very cleverly, on one toe apparently, in the painting by Mr. Hutchison of Bath. As the present century ran into its teens, there were changes which may have caused old Jonathan Tyers to turn in his grave. They cut down many of the trees in his grove, and two sides of that pleasant enclosure and a great part of the Grand Walk were covered in by a colonnade with cast-iron pillars. The place was still in the possession of the Tyers' family, represented by a Mr. Barrett, who had married the daughter of Jonathan Tyers the younger, but there was little other association between the Vauxhall of the early years of George the Third and those of his successor, the patron of the place who, in 1822, conferred the privilege of the royal title upon the proprietors of that year, Mr. Bish, Mr. Gye, and Mr. Hughes. The later Vauxhall is the Vauxhall of Thackeray and Dickens and Albert Smith and Theodore Hook, the Vauxhall of the 20,000 additional lamps, the Vauxhall where Jos Sedley drank too much arrack punch and called Becky Sharp his "tiddy iddy darling," and where Pendennis danced with Fanny Bolton. That Vauxhall is still remembered by persons living, and its latest aspect is best preserved in the drawing of Mr. Doyle in *Punch*. It was a Vauxhall of dancing-floors and balloon ascents, of spectacular panoramas of Arctic regions, of Indian jugglers and Mr. Ducrow's equestrian entertainments—above all the Vauxhall of Mr. Simpson, the wondrous master of the ceremonies,

the "gentle Simpson, that kind smiling idiot," whose personality is preserved in the wonderful etching by Robert Cruikshank. There must be people living yet who remember Mr. Simpson, the very incarnation of humility—Simpson with his knee breeches and shirt frill, his tasselled cane and his dress hat, his wondrous attitudes and his surprising Vauxhall addresses, and his last will and testament, hoping that "the managers would dispose of his humble body as they deemed fit." We glance at this later story of Vauxhall, with its gas lamps and its battle of Waterloo, which the Duke himself went to see and admired, but which Talfourd hoped might be ended by the immediate arrival of the Prussians, as a sort of duty which we owe to the obsequies of the London *al fresco*. The stout at Vauxhall grew muddier, the slices of ham, if possible, thinner, the chickens more skinny, and the company more raffish as modern England became transformed by railways and Reform Bills. There was no place in London for an entertainment which in anyway represented the old pleasant tradition of the *al fresco*. Even the vulgarity and sensations of the later Vauxhall failed to please at last, and the positively last appearances which were announced in successive seasons after the year 1850 became a standing joke of the town. The "last appearance," however, came in the end on July 25th, 1859, and the London *al fresco* was at length laid to rest after a rather discreditable old age, unless, indeed, it still lingered in the doubtful keeping of the projectors of the Cremorne.

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We do not propose to examine that question, but to content ourselves with the pious hope that modern London may one day see a resurrection of a form of pleasure of which it stands, year by year, in greater need.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FAIRS

SOME obscure instinct of the English has chosen the late summer and autumn as the season in which to seek its chief relaxation and enjoyment. It is often suggested that the modern exodus of the population of our great towns to the sea or to the hills of the north, is governed primarily by the fact that Parliament rises in the late summer; indirectly also by the love of sport which prompts our legislators to bid good-bye to the Speaker at the time of the year when sport is easiest to find. The appearance of our great railway stations in August is a plausible argument in favour of this proposition. But a short study of the ways in which our forefathers amused themselves, and the times at which they took their diversion, leads to the conclusion that such a theory is superficial at the best. Field sports, as we understand and practise them, were until quite recent times the amusement of a very small part of the population, who lived constantly in the country, and yet Parliament still rose in the autumn. August and September were the busiest months in an England whose resources were drawn

from agriculture and the care of flocks and herds rather than from the profits of manufactures and commerce. And yet it was in those months that this instinct of the English taught them to lay aside their cares and get what enjoyment they could from the means nearest at hand. Before the era of railways and cheap travelling the great mass of the population of London never went twenty miles from St. Paul's, and the sport they enjoyed took the form of the delights provided by Hockley in the Hole, the Ducking Ponds, and the Cockpits, as we see in other chapters. And yet, as the summer passed away, and the dog-days raised a heat from the cobblestones which drove the dogs themselves into the shade of alley and entry, the common people of London, instead of panting for the water-brooks or the sea-shore, prepared themselves for the great carnivals which were prepared for their delight in one or other of the great fairs of the town.

These annual gatherings followed each other in quick succession in the hot months of the year in the not very promising surroundings of Smithfield, or Southwark, or Westminster. The glory of these entertainments was at its zenith at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and we propose to examine them here as the periodical diversion of great numbers of the inhabitants of London during the next three-quarters of a century.

In one or other of the admirable treatises which have been written on the historical aspect of these

fairs, you may discover that their origin was religious, their development commercial, and their apotheosis an unrestrained indulgence in pleasure or license, as you may choose to regard their diversions. St. Bartholomew Fair, for example, the crown and glory of the whole set, originated in the pious jugglery of Rayer, the abbot of the priory of that saint, who obtained a charter from Henry the First, which enabled him to fleece the pilgrims during the three days' festival of his patron at Smithfield. This holy man, who began life as jester to the king, died in great sanctity in 1143, "leaving a flock of thirteen monks, who did very well on the oblations of rich Londoners." The gathering of pilgrims soon gained a commercial aspect by the establishment of a cloth fair, where other oblations of the pilgrims went to the enrichment of the city merchants, whose good broadcloth protected the pilgrims' bodies while the monks continued to look after their souls. We may read how the city contrived to get a large share in the management of the festival through the efforts of these cloth merchants, and gradually extended the fair beyond the limits of the priory; and how Henry the Eighth took over that religious institution, and reformed it in his thorough-going fashion into the hospital "for the continual relief and help of a hundred sore and diseased," which we still cherish as Bartholomew's Hospital; and how all the privileges of the fair came in time to be divided between the Corporation of London and a patentee of the Crown, Lord Rich.

We shall find that by the time of Queen Elizabeth, the cloth merchants of London having found markets elsewhere, the original three days' fair had expanded into a fourteen days' carnival, which had no pretence of any object but pleasure, and provided Ben Jonson with a subject for a play, which is an epitome of some aspects of the life of his time. All these are explanations of the fact that when modern England began, Bartholomew Fair, after many vicissitudes, had become a great popular festival, opened in state by the Lord Mayor, who drank "a cool tankard of wine, nutmeg, and sugar" at Newgate on his way to Cloth Fair to inaugurate the annual diversions. There he read his proclamation which opened the revels, which were looked forward to for months by the simple and hearty populace of those days as the great annual festival of their lives.

As the evening of the 22nd August came round in each year, the citizens who lived in the parts adjacent to Smithfield were reminded of the imminence of this annual merrymaking by the doings of a mob which seems to have sprung into existence soon after the Long Parliament. It was the custom and the pride of a perennial gang of ruffians, who came to be known—nobody knows why—as "Lady Holland's Mob," to inaugurate the eve of the feast by very singular proceedings. These humourists were accustomed to anticipate the Lord Mayor's proclamation of the morrow, by going round the streets occupied by the fair, ringing bells, pushing and hustling foot-

passengers, and breaking lamps. Lady Holland's Mob was accepted as "a good old custom," and was little interfered with except when their gaiety degenerated into highway robbery. So much was this the case, that it was reckoned inadvisable to put a light in your window on that particular evening in the neighbourhoods of Smithfield or Clerkenwell; and any one whose curiosity prompted him to look out from his upper chamber, accepted the volley of stones which usually greeted his appearance as a matter of course.

It was after preliminaries such as these that the Lord Mayor, as we say, with his officials and trumpeters, went to the entrance of Cloth Fair, after calling at Newgate for his tankard, to open the show, which was the delight of the true citizen and his wife and children, his apprentices, and the lower orders of the town for the time during which it was open. We may note in passing that Lord Mayor Sir John Shorter came to a sad end in 1688 in performing that same function at Newgate. His lordship let down the lid of his tankard with so violent a snap that his horse started, threw him on his head in the Old Bailey, and instead of going on to the Cloth Fair, he was carried back dead to the Mansion House.

On the 24th of August, then, the people of London flocked in their thousands to taste the annual joys of the fair thus inaugurated with all state by their chief magistrate. For the ordinary citizen there was nothing but amusement in the incidents of the fourteen days'

carnival, but for the survivors of the Puritans of the Commonwealth there was little but deadly sin in the same occasion. The puritanical spirit, as we know from present experience, dies hard. At the opening of the eighteenth century there were men alive who had seen King Charles's head roll on the scaffold at Whitehall, and thousands of others whose youth had been formed in the austere school of the men who surrounded Cromwell. We find, accordingly, that there were continual protests from the god-fearing against what they considered the license of the fairs. The cakes and ale of this annual holiday were little in favour with these gentry, and the gin stalls, the gaming-booths, the shops where sausages were eaten in derision of the Jews, above all, the booths of the players, of which the fair was largely composed, were the objects of much of their active hatred.

In the first year of the eighteenth century there was a presentment of the Grand Jury of Middlesex on the subject of Bartholomew Fair, when these good gentlemen attempted to put the clock back to the times of Henry the Seventh at least, by a proposal that all shows and booths should be abolished and the fair restored to its original character of a sale of merchandise, "we esteeming," said the Puritans, using the Grand Jury as a mouthpiece, "the renewing of their former practices at the fair a continuing of one of the chiefest nurseries of vice next to the play-houses."

This double-edged stroke at the fairs and the play-

houses was well timed, for the reason that Bartholomew Fair was on the eve of a very remarkable development in the direction of dramatic entertainments. A few years earlier the elder Penkethman, an actor well known at the patent theatres, had unobtrusively set up a booth and offered a theatrical entertainment among the tight-rope dancers, jugglers, puppet shows and monstrosities, of which the fair was chiefly composed. Penkethman was followed by many imitators from the great theatres. There was Dogget, for instance, the charitable comedian whom we still remember in the annual race for the waterman's coat and badge on the Thames, an actor described by his contemporary Cibber as the most natural of his day; Miller, another player well known at Drury Lane; Bullock, Simpson, and many others who set up booths at the fair during the first few years of the century. The theatrical movement, in fact, became so pronounced that as time went on most of the favourite actors of the day did not disdain to tread the boards in the temporary booths of the fair. Colley Cibber himself, the poet laureate, a man of fashion and a member of the great club at White's, came later, and Quin, Macklin, Woodward, Shuter, were among the lights of the drama who eventually gave a distinguished vogue to the booths of Bartholomew Fair. The dramatic entertainments which were in fashion at the fairs were in the strongest possible contrast to anything we associate with the theatre to-day. They consisted almost invariably of some prodigious long-



yet newly revived with the addition of Noah's Flood; also several fountains playing water during the time of the play. The last scene does represent Noah and his family coming out of the Ark with all the beasts two by two, and all the fowls of the air seen in the prospect sitting upon trees. Likewise over the Ark is seen the sun rising in a most glorious manner. A multitude of angels will be seen in double rank, which presents a double prospect, one for the scene, the other for the palace, where will be seen six angels ringing of bells. Likewise machines descending from above, with Dives rising out of Hell and Lazarus seen in Abraham's bosom, besides several figures dancing Jiggs, Sarabands, and Country Dances to the admiration of the spectators, with the merry conceits of Squire Punch and Sir John Spendall, completed by an entertainment of singing and dancing with several naked swords by a child eight years of age."

Was ever such a medley known, and all to be seen for sixpence! If you went early you would see Noah and the angels strutting on the stage outside the booth. If you made up your mind to sit out the performance to the end, you would towards the finish see a man put his head into the tent and inquire in a loud voice, "Is John Audley here?" This was a signal for the management that another audience was already gathered at the door waiting for admission, and the play which you had gone to see would then be brought to a close with such decency as the circumstances allowed.

In another "droll" of the same period, called "The Tempest, or the Distressed Lovers," the audience was enticed by a very circumstantial bill of the play. There are full particulars of "The English hero and the Island Princess, and the comical humours of the enchanted Scotchman, or Jockey and the three witches." We read how the nobleman, after surprising adventures on the "Indian shore," married the princess; how "his faithful Scotchman fell in among witches, when between 'em is abundance of comical diversions. There in the tempest is Neptune and his Triton in his chariot drawn with sea horses and mair maids singing, with variety of entertainment performed by the best masters; the particulars would be too tedious to be inserted here. Vivat Regina."

In another presentment the story of Tamerlane the Great would be varied with the humours of an Italian scaramouch; in another "the History of the Chaste Susannah" would be "exhibited with a pair of new Elders;" or Punch would add variety to the story of the Queen of Sheba by making rude remarks about King Harry and the French, and "lay his leg upon the queen's lap in a very free manner," as we are informed by Mr. Joseph Addison. In a new opera called "The Cruelty of Atreus," says one of the advertisements of the day, "the scene wherein Thyestes eats his own children is to be performed by the famous Mr. Psalmanazar, lately arrived from Formosa, the whole supper being set to kettle drums."

It was productions of this character which engaged

the energies of the managers both of the puppet-shows and the theatrical booths, and which provided parts for actors who were afterwards well known. Bartholomew Fair indeed became so great a nursery of dramatic talent that many actors afterwards famous obtained their first chance at Smithfield. The fair became a sort of theatrical exchange, where managers during their annual visits were often able to find valuable recruits, and where strolling players from the provinces were accustomed to attend in the hope of engagements with the regular companies. Thus Booth found Wilkes, the original Macheath, playing a part in the *Siege of Rhodes* at Bartholomew's; and Mrs. Horton, a stroller of only one year's standing from Windsor, was so captivating in *Cupid and Psyche* that she was translated forthwith to Drury Lane, where she achieved a gratifying success.

The theatrical importance of the Fair, indeed, became so well established that the managers of the great theatres found it profitable to close their houses altogether during its continuance and take their companies to Smithfield, where they found they could earn more money from the audiences who flocked to their shows during the whole day than from the single performances of the patent theatres. Then pieces were removed bodily from the Haymarket and played at Bartholomew's by the same actors. Great names came to be identified with the booths as time went on. There was Mr. Henry Fielding, for instance, fresh from Eton and Leyden, but without a guinea in his

pocket, who set up a booth, and for ten years provided an entertainment for the people at the fair, in partnership with such actors as Reynolds and Hippesley, Oates and Hall. Fielding produced "The Beggars' Opera" at Smithfield, occasionally trod the boards himself, and received the honour of a visit from the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1732, who were much delighted with his historical drama of "The Fall of Essex." Fielding, indeed, added much to the repute of the fair as a home of the drama by the superior quality of his productions. We learn from an advertisement of his that there was "a commodious passage for the quality and coaches, and care will be taken that there shall be lights and people to conduct them to their places."

There was thus a continual development of the dramatic entertainment at Bartholomew's during the first half of the last century, a progress, however, which was often harassed by persecution from the puritanical bodies. The efforts of these busybodies frequently succeeded in closing the booths, and often left the fair to the gin-stalls, gaming-tables, and jugglers, diversions which were presumably less vicious in their eyes than the dramatic entertainments we have examined. At other times the persecution took the form of an indictment of a particular actor as a rogue and a vagabond. It was always open to the patentees of Drury Lane and Covent Garden to suppress the performance of any player who was unprovided with a licence, and the law was often capriciously invoked

upon the information of some interested informer. The officers would then swoop down upon some obscure player and hale him off before the justices, as when, in 1733, they carried off poor Harper, "a very meek man," upon the information of one Highmore. Harper was committed to Bridewell, but appealed to Westminster Hall, and carried the day, among the acclamations of hundreds of his patrons.

At other times the puritanical spirit would move the Corporation of London to prohibit the booths on the very eve of the fair, even after many of them had already been set up. On such occasions as this, Lady Holland's Mob would be much in evidence. The ordinary attractions of the fair would then be enlivened by a riot of first-class dimensions, which always resulted in assault and battery, and sometimes in sudden death. Mr. Birch, the City Marshal, for example, was killed in attempting to suppress the booths in 1751. Such interference, however, came only at intervals; the theatrical element was, as a rule, left undisturbed, and it remained the chief attraction of Bartholomew Fair for fifty years. Great people from the west did not disdain to visit these humble places of entertainment, and it is on record that the brotherhood of the theatre was so strong at the fair as to prevent the booth-keeper taking Mr. Garrick's money when he went there with his bride in 1749. "No, Mr. Garrick," said the doorkeeper, in refusing the half-crown, "we actors never take money from one another."

The change which at last broke up the supremacy of the theatrical booth at Bartholomew's was the curtailment of the revels from fourteen days to three. There had been many attempts between 1735 and 1750 in the direction of shortening the duration of the fair; and when in the latter year the curtailment was effected in perpetuity, the theatrical glory of the fair was gone. It paid no good actor to take an engagement for so short a period, or a manager to move his company and appointments from one of the theatres of the west. The fair then began to develop attractions of a more varied character.

Very popular among such attractions was the menagerie of wild beasts. Until quite modern times the natural wonder of a homestaying population at the beasts of the field, and especially the dangerous beasts of foreign parts, had little opportunity of satisfaction. The dens of the Tower were great attractions for many generations of Londoners as the one place in London where such fearsome beasts as live lions could be seen. We find accordingly, very early in the last century, that any beast which could be exhibited in a booth was much appreciated. As early as 1702 the good people at Smithfield were regaled with the sight of "a tyger warranted to pluck the feathers from a fowl." A year or two later much excitement was occasioned by the appearance at Smithfield of a menagerie which, from a naïve advertisement, we gather included such rarities as the "Noble Cashaware brought from the Island of Java in the East Indies.

. . . He eats iron, steel, and stones, and he hath two spears grows by his side." There was "a leopard from Lebanon," a "possum" from Hispaniola, an eagle from Russia, and a "great mare of the Tartarean breed;" also a "little black hairy monster, bred in the deserts of Arabia—a natural ruff of hair about his face, walks upright, takes a glass of ale in his hand, and does several other things to admiration."

With our knowledge of the Zoo of to-day, it is not difficult to identify most of these surprising creatures; but they were rare enough in 1708 to induce the inquisitive antiquary and man of science Sir Hans Sloane to haunt the booth for a fortnight, and to employ a draughtsman to make studies of such curiosities.

Later were to be seen "two rattlesnakes, one of very large size, and rattles that you may hear him a quarter of a mile almost, and something of music that grows in the tails thereof." There was a "bovine curiosity or double cow," which had "given uncommon satisfaction to the several learned bodies by whom it has hitherto been seen; a surprising young mermaid, taken on the shores of Aguapulca, that the generality of mankind believe there is no such thing." Such doubts, however, could be satisfied by a visit to Smithfield, and the payment of the nominal sum of sixpence. As the dramatic interest of the fair decreased with the persecutions of the players and the reduction of the rites of the festival to a poor three days, those of the menagerie increased.

Snakes manœuvred up silk ropes to the sound of music at the bidding of some wandering Indian who had strayed to London in 1778. There was "the eagle of the sun that takes the loftiest flight of any bird that flies; the panther from Turkey, on which are thousands of spots, and no two of a likeness; pelicans that suckle their young on their hearts' blood from Egypt; the noble vulture cock, having the finest tallons of any bird that seeks his prey; a beautiful large tyger brought from Bengal by Captain Webster, and the right man tyger brought from Angola by Captain Dalbiac in the Portfield East Indiaman."

It was a happy state of society, we think, which could find continued amusement in such sights as these, but as the last century drew to its close the *naïveté* of the audiences diminished, and dramatic effect apparently became necessary even in the menagerie. It was about that time that the spectacle of the keeper's head in the lion's mouth began to thrill audiences who were no longer moved by a plain "he panther" or the "right man tyger from Bengal." It was then, we believe, that the venerable declamation, which has, nevertheless, a semi-modern ring about it, took its origin. "Does he whisk his tail?" said the keeper with his head in the lion's mouth to his understudy outside the cage. "He does, mate." "Then I am a dead man."

We have touched upon two prominent features of the fair of Bartholomew's only; its other delights

comprised such a collection of attractions as have scarce been seen together elsewhere, among which, however, you may discover the parents of many of the still popular items of variety entertainments. The tight-rope and slack-wire dancing, which are very hardy annuals at such places as the Pavilion, differ little from such performances at Smithfield in the reigns of Anne and the early Georges. There was "Lady Mary," a very favourite artist on the tight-rope for many years, whose beauty attracted and whose modesty resisted the gilded youth of a generation. Lady Mary it was said, was the daughter of a Florentine noble, who eloped with an English acrobat named Finley and married him, learned his trade, and helped to support him until her career was ended in tragedy, when she fell on the boards in 1703, and died a day or two later. There was Clinch, the famous vaulter, "who, being arrived from Italy, will show the world what vaulting is," as we read from his modest advertisement, and whose performance differed little from some we pay our shillings to see to-day. Such men as Fawkes the conjurer, and Pinchbeck the "machine man," originated that pleasing illusion the flower trick, which has delighted successive generations of sightseers and helped to support other generations of conjurers right down to our own times. It is pleasant to learn that these old showmen died with handsome fortunes acquired by their efforts to amuse the people at Bartholomew Fair and elsewhere. Flockton made £10,000 at the fairs by his

puppet-shows, which we remember little changed as marionettes. There were natural curiosities, which do not seem to have survived, like that of the gentleman with stentorian lungs who undertook "to break a glass and shatter window-panes by the loudness of his vociferation," but we may all recognise "the wonderful man who talks in his belly and can fling his voice into any part of the room," in one of the commonest of our entertainments. Peep-shows of the Siege of Gibraltar and the like, gingerbread stalls, and many other humble joys of a similar kind at these old fairs are still alive and are drawing the pence of children in the provinces, if not in London.

With attractions such as these Bartholomew Fair kept London amused for centuries, and provided the chief diversion of the year for a great number of citizens. Nor were its delights alone prepared for the humbler classes of the city, who were its chief supporters, for an occasional visit to Smithfield was recognised as a mild and acceptable excitement by greater people further west, and the ordinary citizen from Holborn or Cheapside had often the advantage of rubbing shoulders with a great personage. It was no uncommon sight at Bartholomew's to see an exquisite like Chesterfield, or a great minister like Sir Robert Walpole, with his star on his breast, tasting the diversions of the fair alone and on foot. Parties of bloods from White's and Almack's were not above exchanging humorous badinage with the fruit-sellers or the prettier of the strollers or acrobats, or even chucking

them under the chin. In the middle of the century might be seen so well-known a member of the quality as Horace Walpole escorting a party of ladies through the dust of Smithfield. The magazine writers of the same period are eloquent upon the visits of royalty itself. There would be a flare of torches brighter than the lamps and candles of the booths, the sound of measured steps, a pressing of the crowd from the middle of the alleys, a cry of "Room for his Royal Highness, room for Prince George," and Frederick Prince of Wales would walk through the alleys between the booths preceded by little Mr. Rich, the Master of the Ceremonies, from Covent Garden Theatre, surrounded by his beefeaters, and leading the little Prince George by the hand.

In addition to all other attractions of the fair was that chance of turbulence, disorder, and horseplay always dear to a crowd of Englishmen. Lady Holland's Mob was an evergreen which flourished through season after season, and was always ready at a moment's notice to join issue with the powers represented by the constables of the corporation. The periodical suppression of the booths in the early part of the century was a frequent opportunity for their exertions, in which, as we have seen, bailiffs were sometimes killed. At another time some aggrieved tradesman who resisted the tolls demanded by the authorities on his industry of gin or gingerbread selling, would provide the mob with a chance of asserting themselves and defying the authorities.

Their operations would then add an attraction to the fair which was much appreciated by large numbers of its patrons. When such incidents failed, the mere breaking of a swing-boat was excuse enough for the burning of the entire apparatus, and for an organised expedition throughout the precincts of the carnival in search of similar erections, and a general conflagration followed, in which the benches and tables of the sausage vendors were added to the flames. Altogether, however, there is very little record of loss of life or damage to property in connection with the fair during its vogue of five centuries. A stage broke down occasionally when the piety of Noah or King Solomon, or the wings of the angels or the godhead of Apollo or Jupiter, failed to save them from broken limbs. A juggler or a tight-rope dancer paid with his life for his courage and temerity on occasion. But disaster was rare, and the fact that a congregation of such inflammable material as mustered annually in Smithfield escaped serious fire is a standing wonder to this day.

Bartholomew Fair was hardly closed before preparations were in train on St. Margaret's Hill, near Southwark Town Hall, for another festival of the same character. Southwark Fair was also of very respectable antiquity, for the festival originated in a charter of Edward the Sixth granted in the year 1550, and like most of the London fairs was at its zenith in the opening years of the eighteenth century. It came to an end only after a continuous career of two hun-

dred and thirteen years. As the 7th of September came round in each year, the same gin stalls, gaming-tables, gingerbread stalls, and theatrical booths which had delighted Smithfield were packed up, taken across the river, and displayed in all their attractiveness to new audiences of South Londoners at Southwark.

Thus, although not on the same scale as Bartholomew Fair, that of Southwark differed little from it in character. You may trace the same booth proprietors, the same actors, and the same pieces in the handbills of both; Fielding, Miller, Powell, Penkethman, all extended their operations to those fresh audiences across the river. There was one performance, however, that took a greater breadth at Southwark than at Smithfield, that of the acrobat or rope dancer. Such performers were little troubled by municipal authorities in those days, and in the absence of the restrictions of Boards of Works or County Councils, their displays at Southwark were often organised on a generous scale. It must have been quite thrilling to see a man swing across the street from St. George's Church tower to the Mint, as was the custom of Mr. Cadman at Southwark. The incomparable Violantes, too, in their prime never missed the fair, the geniuses who had established their reputation by sliding down a slack rope from the steeple of St. Martin's Church in the Fields right across St. Martin's Lane to the Royal Mews, in the presence of royalty itself. Mr. Cadman, as we learn, came to a sad end in attempting a bold flight across the Severn at Shrewsbury, and a poet of

his day, moved by the tragedy of the occasion, spread his feelings over poor Cadman's tombstone, as all may read in Shrewsbury churchyard—

“No, no, a faulty cord being drawn too tight,
Hurried his soul on high to take her flight,
Which bid the body here beneath good-night.”

The humours of Southwark Fair inspired Mr. Hogarth in one of his finest efforts, wherein are reflected so admirably the life of his times, and that excellent plate of Southwark Fair is as good an illustration as need be of the importance of the festival among the popular diversions of the middle of the eighteenth century. The greatly daring acrobat on the rope stretching from the church tower to the Mint, which is out of the picture, is the great Mr. Cadman himself; the artist on the slack rope on the other side of the picture is a back view of the Violante. Mr. Figg, the famous “Master of the Noble Science of Self-defence,” displays his honourable wounds on the right. His booth is round the corner, and he is riding through the fair with a very martial aspect to gather clients to witness a set-to between himself and some other bald-pated hero of the sword or quarter-staff. On the right of the pretty girl with the drum and the black page, who is effectively advertising the show which she represents, is Tamerlane the Great in full armour being arrested by a bailiff. The enormous posters of the background, which almost blot out the church,

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and display the attractions of the Fall of Troy, the Royal Waxworks, and the wonderful performance of Mr. Banks and his horse, are all quite typical of the London fair, and Mr. Hogarth's grim humour appears to perfection in the title of the show which he represents as tumbling into the street on the right, with its actors and orchestra and monkey on the pole, the "Fall of Bagdad." Note too the peep-show and the hag presiding over the gaming-table, and the pleasant glimpse of open country between the houses.

There is little in the prim locality which to-day spreads itself north of Piccadilly to Oxford Street and westward from Bond Street to Park Lane to remind us of the revels of a distinctly low-class populace. And yet Chapel Street and Hertford Street were the centre of a popular carnival, dating from the times of Edward the First, a carnival which opened on "the 25th day of June, the eve of St. James's," and had a reputation distinct in many ways from the similar merrymaking at Smithfield and Southwark. The name of those revels still survives in that of the district "Mayfair," though there was nothing in them of the aristocratic flavour which one associates with that district to-day. The proceedings in Mayfair were at times even too strong for the stomach of the Restoration, for we find in 1664 that it was suppressed "on account of looseness and irregularity." The Puritans were again active in the reign of Anne. "Oh the piety of some people about the Queen," says one of them in the *Observer*, "who can suffer things

of this nature to go undiscovered to her Majesty, and consequently unpunished. Can any rational man imagine that her Majesty would permit so much lewdness as is committed at Mayfair for so many days together, so near her royal palace, if she knew anything of the matter. I do not believe the patent for that fair allows the patentees the liberty of setting up the devil's shops and exposing his merchandise for sale."

What was the precise vanity of Mayfair which so moved this honest gentleman we are unable to discover. We meet again at Mayfair the puppet-shows of Smithfield and Southwark, as, for example, "an excellent droll called Crispin and Crispianus, or a Shoemaker and a Prince, with the best machines, singing and dancing ever yet in the fair." Woodward, the admirable comedian, made his first appearance in a booth "opposite the Three Jolly Butchers," from the humble boards of which establishment he was soon translated to those of the great theatre in Covent Garden. Pennant remembered the locality of Mayfair "covered with booths, temporary theatres, and every enticement to low pleasures;" and the place had undoubtedly a raffish flavour over all its amusements which was peculiar to itself, and unshared by the older institutions further east.

On the other hand, many of the attractions, records of which have survived, are just as vicious or as virtuous as the diversions at other gatherings of the sort. There was an obliging Frenchman who exhibited, with a *sang-froid* born of safety to his own

skin, his wife, a thin woman of much beauty, raising an anvil with her hair, and supporting the same implement on her breast, while a company of three blacksmiths forged a horseshoe upon it with the usual heavy hammers. Another great attraction of Mayfair was the beheading of puppets "in a coalshed attached to Mr. Smith's, the grocer's." A shutter was fixed horizontally, upon which a puppet laid his head. After much formality, it was decapitated by another puppet, armed with a portentous axe. Sidney, Raleigh, Charles the First, Russell, and other martyrs of history, bled thus again in effigy through many years at Mayfair.

Other features of the fair, less innocent, at times caused great riots, in which men lost their lives, both on the spot and at Tyburn afterwards. Undesirable women were excluded from the precincts; the guards from St. James's took the frail ones' side; bailiffs and constables were killed, and the general license of the meetings at Mayfair was forced upon the attention of the town by very deplorable proceedings. There was certainly no moral strictness in society in the year 1720, so we may assume that the presentation of Mayfair by the Grand Jury of Middlesex for several successive years was justified by the facts. A royal proclamation hushed its revels for ever in that year—a result aided perhaps by considerations connected with the interest of an influential nobleman, Lord Coventry, whose property suffered much by the low character of the company which the fair never failed

to attract. The neighbourhood shortly afterwards was covered with the streets and houses which to-day form that compact quarter of the town which as Mayfair keeps the memory of the old popular institution alive.

We have glanced at most of the attractions of the three great London Fairs which provided amusement for the great body of Londoners through many centuries. They are typical only of many others, for the annual fair was a great institution at scores of villages round the town and its suburbs, and indeed throughout the country. Westminster had a fair dating from the year 1257, held in St. Margaret's Churchyard and Tothill Fields, which had a continuous career until the year 1819. Peckham gained a royal charter for a fair by a propitious accident and the good offices of Nell Gwynn, when his Majesty King Charles, highly pleased by a successful stag hunt which ended at that village, granted the charter upon the intercession of that lady. There was a highly organised fair called Tottenham Court Fair, held on or near the site of the Adam and Eve Tavern, which still stands at the corner of the Euston and Hampstead Roads. Tottenham Court was a fair attended by all the better class of theatrical booths from Smithfield and Southwark, and it presented another great attraction in the booth of Jack Broughton, the father of the prize-ring. Enterprising Londoners would go as far as Edmonton, Blackheath, Kingston, Parson's Green, and Wands-

worth, and by their presence and their shillings help the success of annual meetings at those places, which are only examples of similar festivals which had a vogue of centuries in villages a little further afield. Many of these, of which that of Greenwich is the best remembered, continued well on into living memory; but they had most of them passed their prime before the opening of the present century.

The palmy days of Bartholomew's, the greatest of all the fairs, began to depart as early as the middle of last century, when the great people of St. James's withdrew their patronage, and St. Giles's and Bloomsbury, bemoaning the loss of tone, followed their example. The company grew more raffish, more sophisticated, and consequently harder to please, and we find the eulogies of the early writers exchanged for the patronising descriptions of the papers of the West End, with columns of facetious raillery, and numbers of the dreariest and most feeble jokes printed in italics, in order, perhaps, that their point might not be missed. There were often interesting figures to be seen at Smithfield, even in its later days; the Patagonian Giant of the 'nineties was no other than the great Egyptian traveller Belzoni of a later date. But things were getting in a bad way when Belvidera, in "Venice Preserved," came out of her booth and knocked down the King's Trumpeter for having demanded his fees. The further history of Bartholomew's, as of all other fairs, is one of decline. In 1825 its shows were banished to Islington, and for a further

twenty-five years the festival struggled on with such poor attractions as merry-go-rounds, swing-boats, and gingerbread stalls. In 1850 Lord Mayor Musgrave, going to read his proclamation at Cloth Fair, found his occupation gone, even the gingerbread sellers had seceded from participation in the maimed festival, and the revelry which had prevailed at Smithfield during centuries was at last hushed for ever.

It was at one or other of these old gatherings, as we say, that ordinary commonplace London found its chief diversion during the summers of many centuries. Upon a review of the whole subject it is possible to admire the simplicity which could find amusement in their rather limited attractions for so long, and to envy the state of mind of a public which could be so easily pleased. There was, as we have seen, little variety, and the same attractions amused the same audiences year after year at the great fairs of the town, and at the smaller gatherings of the suburban villages. Humble personages reappeared season after season with such regularity as to establish themselves as public institutions. There was Tiddy Doll, for instance, the merry-andrew who joked for a guinea a day at Bartholomew Fair and Southwark, and sold gingerbread for the rest of the year in Covent Garden. During that long period of preparation Tiddy Doll maintained a demeanour as solemn as that of a bishop, without the cracking of a single joke or the concession of a single smile which might diminish his stock for the short days of those joyous festivals. That there was

humour of a sort at these meetings in plenty, we make no doubt. There was Mr. Lane, for example, "first performer to the King, who played off his snip, snap, rap and thunder tricks so that the grown babies stared like worried cats," and the other obliging gentleman who undertook "to drive about forty twelpenny nails into any gentleman's breech, place him in a loadstone chair, and withdraw them without the least pain." Humour, too, could not be quite dead at a meeting where you could get the ballad of "The Delicate History of the Ferret and the Coney" for a penny. The title alone was surely worth the money.

There are pleasant glimpses too of some prettier aspects of the fairs to be gleaned in their old records, as when Mrs. Pritchard charmed her hearers with her dainty singing of "Sweet, if you love me, smiling turn"; there is music in the line yet, and one is glad to know that her charm in the song at Bartholomew's resulted in a prosperous career at the theatres of the west. You may find much pleasant allusion to these and other aspects of the fairs in such admirable histories of their pleasures as Mr. Morley's "Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair," and Mr. Frost's "Old Showmen." And we feel that with much that was trivial and vulgar, coarse and riotous from our modern standpoint, there must have been much in these old entertainments to justify the hearty pleasures they excited. In any case they are not lacking in human interest as the relaxations of generations of our forefathers who have now been many years asleep.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRIZE-RING

"YESTERDAY," says the *Protestant Mercury* for January 12th, 1681, "a match of boxing was performed before his Grace the Duke of Albemarle between the duke's footman and a butcher. The latter won the prize, as he hath done many before, being accounted, though but a little man, the best at that exercise in England."

The historians of pugilism, who are many and laborious, are agreed that the *Mercury's* quaint report of his grace's diversion is the earliest record of a public boxing match in England. That early encounter presents many of the essential features of others which followed it in later times and went to make up the glory of the prize-ring. Here was a noble patron looking on at two men, with no quarrel between them, engaged in punching each other's heads for the sake of a monetary consideration. Later, as we shall see, the prize-ring claimed all kinds of virtues for its principles and professors. It was "the noble science of self-defence," "the nurse of the true British spirit," and many other fine things beside, if we are to believe its votaries and supporters. The

prize-ring was in reality a spectacular entertainment which provided amusement for many generations of loafers who found the money to keep it going, and occupation for a relatively small number of courageous men who lived by that strange industry of head-punching. It differed in degree only, and not in kind, from those ancient gladiatorial combats about which Lord Byron wrote so touchingly in a famous passage, his lordship being at that moment a distinguished supporter of the "fancy," as the cult was then affectionately styled by its votaries. It is in this aspect of an amusement for Londoners that we wish to consider the subject of pugilism, and by no means as an athletic exercise. The athleticism was confined to the men who fought, who numbered altogether about 1500 in 150 years. The athletic part played by the vast proportion of the "fancy" was displayed in getting to the ring and back again, or in evading the police. The prize-ring, nevertheless, had a surprising vogue as a show among men of all classes for a great number of years. We ask the reader to accompany us through its rather dubious records, and to determine, perhaps, the place it is entitled to claim among the diversions of past generations of Londoners.

We saw in another chapter how Londoners of all classes, the lower perhaps in a majority, flocked to Hockley in the Hole, to Figg's theatre in the Oxford Road, or to his booth in Southwark Fair, and to other establishments of the same kind, to

taste the joys of the prize-fight as presented by Figg and his satellites, then an affair of swords mainly, like the students' duel of Germany to-day ; of swords used to produce shallow cuts in the limbs or face, and without thrust or serious attack on a vital. It would appear that the ancient cult of the fist was at a discount during that ascendancy of the sword. Such references to pugilism as exist apply mainly to the semi-comic encounters between women which we have noticed ; but there was silently establishing itself among the sporting characters of those days a taste for the encounter with the naked fist, which lacked but a leader and the patronage of the great to develop into a great national institution, destined to become the plaything of certain classes for a century and a half.

We must look, as we say, for the birth of that great organisation of the London prize-ring to those lowly establishments of which Mr. Figg's theatre was the most reputable. Mr. Figg's business card, designed for him by Mr. Hogarth, describes that gladiator as 'Master of ye noble science of defence, on ye right hand in Oxford Road, near Adam and Eve Court, teaches gentlemen ye use of ye small sword, back-sword, and quarterstaff at home and abroad.' There is nothing said here as to Figg's skill in pugilism, and we believe that most of the exhibitions in boxing which took place at Figg's were subsidiary to the affairs with the sword, or stick, or quarterstaff, and were produced as additional but minor attractions to those exhibitions. Figg, indeed, is often spoken of as

the first pugilistic champion, though there is no record of any pitched battle in which he took part. His establishments, nevertheless, both in the Oxford Road and at Southwark Fair, were the nurseries for many of the earliest exponents of pugilism. "At Figg's Great Til'd Booth on the Bowling Green, Southwark, during the time of the Fair," to quote one of his handbills, among the attractions set forth were "the manly arts of foil play, backsword, cudgelling, and boxing. Buckhorse and several other pugilists will show the art of boxing, to conclude with a grand parade by the valiant Figg, who will exhibit his knowledge in various combats with the foil, backsword, cudgel, and fist." Besides Mr. Figg's establishment, there were others conducted on quite similar lines, though with less success, at Smithfield, Moorfields, and St. George's Fields. A Mr. Andrew Johnson, who was said to be an uncle of the great Doctor, presided at Smithfield; a man nicknamed "old Vinegar" at Moorfields; and a gentleman named Remington, called Long Charles by his clients, was the patron of another establishment known as the Ring. It was in such establishments as these, and in the temporary booths at all the great fairs, that the London prize-ring took its origin.

Historians of pugilism, which has still its fascination for many sportsmen, judging by the volumes which have been written upon it, have spent much labour in discovering and recording the names and the exploits of its earliest heroes. They are all indebted to the invaluable Captain Godfrey, who told us so much of

interest about the swordsmen. It is to him alone, indeed, that the disciples of the great Figg are indebted for their rescue from oblivion. There is a "character" of each of these worthies in the Captain's quarto, the men who originated the tradition of spectacular pugilism, and who carried it forward until John Broughton, a few years later, gave it shape and regulations, and attracted patronage which established its vogue and secured its place among the amusements of the town.

The prize-ring, in its career of a century and a half, produced many famous professors whom we shall have to leave without mention; but the Captain's gallery of portraits all claim enumeration, because his remarks upon each throw much light upon the nature of the science they practised in its origin, and enable us to compare its early beginnings with the later developments which filled so large a place in the sporting life of half a century ago.

One of the earliest of Mr. Figg's scholars seems to have been Tom Pipes, "Pipes" who, says the Captain, "was the neatest boxer I remember; he put in his blows about the face, which he fought at most, with surprising time and judgment." Pipes' great opponent was George Gretting, "who was the most artful boxer, much stronger made than Pipes. Gretting had the neatest way of going to the stomach, which is what they call the mark, of any man I knew; but Gretting had not the bottom of the other." "Bottom," as we learn from the Captain, was "wind, spirit, or heart,

or wherever you can fix the true residence of courage."

Figg's other disciples were Bob Whitaker and Ned Peartree. The Captain's remarks on these gladiators and the fights with which their names are connected, are very instructive as to these early encounters and as to the motives which set the men fighting. In the year 1733, it seems, a gigantic Venetian came to England in the suite of an English nobleman who had been the grand tour. This man had a reputation as a great boxer, and the patrons of the sport were at once determined to find a man to match him. Captain Godfrey happened to be at Slaughter's Coffee-house when the match was made, and gives us many interesting particulars. "A gentleman of advanced station" sent for Figg to procure a proper man to oppose the Venetian. Upon arrival Mr. Figg was admonished to be careful in his choosing, as the Gondolier was famous for breaking the jawbone. "I do not know, master, but that he may break one of his countrymen's jawbones with his fist," replied Figg in his "rough manner," "but I'll bring him a man and he shall not be able to break his jawbone with a sledge-hammer."

The match was arranged to take place at Figg's amphitheatre, and we have the great advantage of the Captain's report of this early battle as an eye-witness.

"The battle was fought at Figg's amphitheatre before a splendid company, the politest house of that kind I ever saw. . . . The Gondolier pitched himself

forward with his right leg and his arm full extended, and as Whitaker approached gave him a blow on the side of the head which knocked him quite off the stage, which was remarkable for its height. Whitaker's misfortune in his fall was then the grandeur of the company, on which account they suffered no common people in, that usually sit on the ground and line the stage round. It was then all clear, and Whitaker had nothing to stop him but the bottom. There was a general foreign huzza on the side of the Venetian pronouncing our countryman's downfall ; but Whitaker took no more time than was required to get up again when he . . . with a little stoop, ran boldly in beyond the heavy mallet, and with one English peg in the stomach, quite a new thing to the foreigners, brought him on his breech. The blow carried too much of the English rudeness for him to bear, and finding himself so unmannerly used, he scorned to have any more doings with his slovenly fist."

Mr. Figg here stepped on the stage, we learn, to make the most of the fashionable company and of the enthusiasm which the victory of Whitaker called forth. Gentlemen might suppose that he had picked the best man in London to meet the Gondolier. Not at all. "He engaged to produce to them that day se'nnight a man who should beat Whitaker in ten minutes by fair fighting. This brought very near as great and fine a company as the week before," records the Captain, who was again present. "The man was Nathaniel Peartree, who, knowing the other's bottom

and his deadly mode of flinging, took a most judicious method to beat him. . . . He knew Whitaker's hardiness, and doubting of his being able to give him beating enough, cunningly determined to fight at his eyes. His judgment carried in his arm so well that in about six minutes both of Whitaker's eyes were shut up, when, groping about awhile for his man and finding him not, he wisely gave out with these odd words, 'Damme, I am not beat,' but what signifies my fighting when I cannot see my man.'"

We have in the accounts of these two old encounters all the typical features of the organised prize-fight of later times. No quarrel between the men, an array of patrons looking on, and two pugilists punching each other into a jelly for the sake of the stakes, swollen by a certain proportion of the very considerable sum obtained by the gate money. These are all points to be borne in mind as we proceed. There has been much rubbish talked and written about the virtues of pugilism, its encouragement of fairplay, its fostering of the British spirit, its assumed credit of suppressing the use of the knife among Englishmen, and much more. But it is quite certain that the motives which brought Mr. Figg on to the stage to announce the second encounter between Whitaker and Peartree were the same which kept the successors of those heroes face to face for the next century. Prize-fighting, in short, was in its origin and development a spectacular entertainment, conducted on a sound commercial basis, and so it con-

tinued until public opinion, recognising the fact, suppressed its vices and its virtues together well within living memory.

Among Mr. Figg's gladiators was a youthful pugilist of much promise named George Taylor, and when death claimed the champion in 1734, George the Barber, as he was known to his admirers, found means to take over the amphitheatre in the Oxford Road. We have a "character" of George from our invaluable Captain, and we look upon him as a link between his predecessor Figg, who was mainly a swordsman, and John Broughton, his successor, whose fame rests entirely on his eminence as a bruiser. Taylor did the honours of the amphitheatre with much success, opened another establishment four years later, the Great Booth, Tottenham Court, and was noted for his proficiency in the science of the sword, his exposition of the mysteries of the hanging guard being reckoned particularly fine. But he interests us here chiefly as the organiser and improver of the pugilistic side of his show. He surrounded himself with a crowd of boxers, and was himself proficient in the art. Captain Godfrey describes Taylor as "a strong, able pugilist, with a remarkable judgment in the cross buttock fall." If George had been "unquestionable in his bottom," which was unfortunately not the case, the Captain opined that he would have been a match for any man. The boxers, nevertheless, gathered round him and challenged each other to combat at his booth

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in the approved style of the old swordsmen. Says one of these quaint old announcements in the *Daily Advertiser* of May 4th, 1742 :—

“ At George Taylor’s Booth, Tottenham Court Road. There will be a trial of manhood here to-morrow between the following champions, viz. :—

Whereas I, John Francis, commonly known by the name of the Jumping Soldier, who have always had the reputation of a good fellow, and have fought several bruisers in the street, &c., nor am I ashamed to mount the stage when my manhood is called in question by an Irish braggadocio whom I fought some years ago in a bye-battle for twelve minutes, and though I had not the success due to my courage and ability in the art of boxing, I now invite him to fight me for two guineas at the time and place above mentioned, where I doubt not I shall give him the truth of a good beating.

JOHN FRANCIS.”

The Irishman’s answer :—

“ I, Patrick Henley, known to every one for the truth of a good fellow, who never refused anyone on or off the stage, and fight as often for the diversion of gentlemen as for money, do accept the challenge of this Jumping Jack, and shall, if he don’t take care, give him one of my bothering blows which will convince him of his ignorance in the art of boxing.

PATRICK HENLEY.”

It was such men as these, as we say, who found employment at Taylor’s Booth in Tottenham Court Road, and drew their share of the gate money, the gate money which, as we learn from Mr. Miles’ excellent “*Pugilistica*,” often amounted to £150. Of this Taylor took one-third, and the remaining two-thirds were parted between the combatants, the sum so allocated being again divided into three parts,

of which the winner took two and the loser one. The whole arrangement strikes one as fair and business-like, but it is well to recognise that finance was the basis of the prize-ring from the first, and that it was no abstract admiration for "the noble science of self-defence," or the "British spirit," which set and kept that remarkable organisation agoing.

At Taylor's booth then were to be found the small band of men who a few years later found a leader in the incomparable John Broughton, and supported that eminent pugilist when he successfully organised their profession into a recognised institution of the town, in providing it with a set of rules and regulations which held the field unaltered for a century. Here were Pipes and Gretting and Whitaker already mentioned, Prince Boswell, Stevenson the Coachman, Will Willis, Tom Smallwood, Buckhorse, Jack James, Field the Sailor, and last and greatest of all, John Broughton himself.

Captain Godfrey helps us to the understanding of the sporting personalities of some of this group; we like quoting the Captain, because he evidently believes in himself and his subject, and his language is direct, and refreshing in its simplicity by the side of the greater portion of the literature of the ring, much of which, indeed, is but an inflated maltreatment of the Captain's own honest story. James was "a most charming boxer and delicate in his blows," Smallwood and George Stevenson the Coachman "were the best bottomed men of the modern boxers." The Captain

saw Stevenson fight Broughton for forty minutes "in one of the fair booths at Tottenham Court, railed at the end towards the pit." "Smallwood wanted but weight to stand against any man." Boswell the Prince was the son of a gipsy king, with a particular blow "with his left hand at the jaw which came almost as hard as a little horse kicks, but he wanted the courage to qualify him for a compleat boxer." . . . "Fye upon his dastard heart that mars it all," exclaims our author; the Captain could not away with "his wormdread soul," his "nurse wanting courage," his terrible lack of the "true British bottom."

For Jack Broughton, however, was reserved the height of Godfrey's eloquence as well as the honour of the foundation of the London prize-ring. "Advance, brave Broughton," he says, "thee I pronounce Captain of the Boxers . . . strength equal to what is human, skill and judgment equal to what can be acquired, undebauched wind and a bottom spirit never to pronounce the word enough." No "fly flap blows such as the pastry-cooks use to beat those insects from their tarts and cheesecakes" were Broughton's. "No, Broughton steps bold and firmly in, and his firm body seconding his arm, pours the pile-driving force upon his man."

This paragon among prize-fighters, who really was, as we believe, a good fellow, has been found worthy of a place among the immortals of the great national biography. We learn there that he was born in 1705; began life as a waterman's apprentice, and

found his true vocation quite early in life by thrashing a fellow-waterman. He then went to George Taylor's booth, beat that hero, and so claimed the championship, and set up an opposition establishment of his own in Hanway Street. Here he had a successful career of unbroken victory, during which he organised pugilism as a profession, and retired, after his only defeat, on a modest fortune to Lambeth. John Broughton died at the age of eighty-four, in 1789, and left some £7000 behind him, and lies buried in Lambeth churchyard under a tombstone with a Latin inscription on it.

Such in brief is the life history of the founder of the prize-ring, but for us its closer details have interest. We have said that he gave laws to his profession; he also drew to the ring the valuable patronage of the highly placed, including that glory of the Hanoverians, the young Duke of Cumberland. Some say, indeed, that Broughton was his highness's coachman, but we do not take upon ourselves to correct the orthodox life of the hero as set out in the biographical dictionary in that particular. It is claimed for him by some of his admirers that he was the inventor of all stopping and guarding blows, and that before his day pugilism was a mere unscientific display of hard hitting. He was certainly one of its chief pillars, and his organisation of its practice set it upon a basis as a diversion of the people which it had lacked before his time, and which it retained subsequently for a century.

It is not uninstrusive to turn again for a moment to the candid Godfrey and consider the objects which the professors of the noble science of self-defence had in their minds as they faced each other in the ring. We have examined the nature of the mainspring which set the whole machine of the prize-ring in motion, and Godfrey leaves us in no doubt as to the character of the science itself and the objects of its practitioners. The Captain has a cold-blooded list of the deadliest strokes it is possible to inflict upon your adversary, with sound anatomical reasons for each. If you listen to this appalling expert you may learn "the blow under the ear to be as dangerous as any, because in this part there are two blood-vessels both considerably large," and from his further physiological researches, in which we need not follow him, the Captain deduces great virtues for the well-planted blow under the ear. You may so punch a man on that magic spot, indeed, that "his blood is forced up to his brain and back upon his heart," and with luck you will see it gushing from his eyes, ears, and mouth. If fortune is more than ordinarily kind, you will soon see follow a "cardiaca or suffocation." There is much virtue also in a blow between the eyebrows, because the eyelids "swell almost instantaneously, which violent contumescence soon obstructs the sight. "A man thus indecently treated," continues the Captain, "and artfully hoodwinked, is beat about at his adversary's discretion." Of course he was. We saw poor Mr. Whitaker say "Damme" in those em-

barrassing circumstances, and we shall still see Broughton the peerless lose his championship and his patrons' money in bearing witness to the virtues of the blow between the eyes. Blows on the stomach were also highly recommended by the Captain, "because the diaphragm and lungs share in the injury." The object of the pugilist, indeed, was to disable and, if needs be, kill his adversary as soon as possible, and it was a solemn farce played by five or six generations of parasites, who looked on in safety, betted on it, wrote about it, and made money out of its atrocities, which represented the prize-ring as a mere school for the art of self-defence and the embodiment of all the manly virtues. Self-defence could be taught and practised with gloves, as it is to-day, without all those degrading exhibitions of broken limbs and jaws and blinded eyes, punctuated every few years by the bleeding corpse carried out of the ring to the nearest tavern.

Returning to the eminent Mr. Broughton, he went, as we have said, to Mr. Taylor's establishment, the "Great Booth" in Tottenham Court Road, where he quickly established himself as the star of the company. He beat nearly all the eminent hands we have mentioned—Pipes, Gretting, Stevenson, James, Taylor himself, and no doubt others whose names have not survived. Broughton was the life of Taylor's establishment until the year 1742. It was his eminence in the same profession, no doubt, which led to the difference with Taylor, to the separation and newspaper controversy with that pugilist which followed, and to

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Broughton's building the brand new Amphitheatre in Hanway Street, "the back of the late Mr. Figg's," and his final establishment at the head of the profession.

The important event of the opening of the new Amphitheatre was thus announced in the *Daily Advertiser* :—

"AT BROUGHTON'S NEW AMPHITHEATRE,
OXFORD STREET,

The back of the late Mr. Figg's,
On Tuesday next, the 13th instant,
Will be exhibited

THE TRUE ART OF BOXING

By the eight following men, viz. :—

ABRAHAM EVANS,	— ROGER,
— SWEEP,	— ALLEN,
— BELAS,	ROBERT SPIKES, and
— GLOVER,	HARRY GRAY the clogmaker.

The above eight men to be brought on the stage and to be matched according to the approbation of the gentlemen who shall be pleased to honour them with their company.

N.B.—There will be a BATTLE ROYAL between the
NOTED BUCKHORSE

And SEVEN or EIGHT more, after which there will be several
BYE BATTLES by others.

Gentlemen are therefore requested to come by times.
The doors will be open at nine ; the champions mount at eleven ;
and no person is to pay more than A SHILLING."

Mr. Taylor at once replied to this advertisement of his rival by one of his own :—

“To the patrons and encouragers of the manly art of boxing.

“Whereas Mr. Broughton, well knowing that I was to fight Mr. Field on Tuesday next, the 13th of March 1743, in order to injure me has maliciously advertised to open his amphitheatre on that day, and where several battles are then to be fought. To prevent the public from being deceived I feel it my duty to inform them that the principal part of the persons mentioned were never made acquainted with such circumstances, and have no intention of so doing. Mr. Broughton wishes it to appear that he never imposed upon any of the pugilists who had been concerned with him in any transactions whatever; but his imposition shall soon be made manifest to the world. And to show Mr. Broughton that I have no animosity against him as a pugilist or any jealousy concerning his amphitheatre, I am willing to fight him as soon as he may think proper wherever it may please him, not regarding, as he loudly sets forth, the strength of his arm.

“GEORGE TAYLOR.”

We are afraid that Mr. Taylor's jealousy was more real than he pretended. There followed between the pair much exchange of hard sayings in the public papers. Taylor accused Broughton of taking the “lion's share” of the gate money; Broughton satisfied his patrons that he had taken only the orthodox third. Broughton, indeed, was as successful against Mr. Taylor with his pen as he was with his fist. Taylor like a wise man gave in, joined the opposition establishment in Hanway Street, and the incomparable Broughton, thus overcoming all opposition, gathered the talent of his profession about him at the Amphitheatre, and took his place at its head.

That eminent position had advantages which Broughton was quick to seize upon in order to produce that

set of regulations for the conduct of the prize-fight upon which his fame chiefly rests. These rules, which held the field until 1838 without verbal alteration, are to be found in all histories of the prize-ring; they are too long to quote here in full, but their substance is of interest. The rules very curiously omit the size of the stage, but are quite clear in other particulars. They established the all-important principles of the "round" or "set-to," defined as "a set-to after a fall or being parted at the rails"; the institution of a time limit between the rounds; the appointment of umpires and referee, and the humane regulation "that no person is to hit his adversary when he is down, or seize him by the ham, the breeches, or any part below the waist; a man on his knees to be reckoned down." They also confirmed the usage of the division of the gate money between victor and vanquished, and if one admits the expediency of prize-fighting at all, he will probably admit also the efficacy and even the beneficence of Mr. Broughton's famous regulations.

Broughton, endowed as he was with the muscles of the prize-fighter, which made him the best pugilist of his day, and with the ability which enabled him to conduct the commercial side of his profession with success, was also very fortunate in the patronage he received. There are many stories of his connection with the Duke of Cumberland. His royal highness, it was said, took him on the Continent; showed him the famous guardsmen of Frederick the Great, and asked

him how he would regard a set-to with one of those redoubtable giants. "I should have no objection, your highness, to fight the whole regiment if you would allow me a breakfast between each battle," was the legendary reply. It is said that the duke's illustrious brother, Frederick Prince of Wales, gave much encouragement to the clever bruiser and to his undertaking at the Amphitheatre. Broughton undoubtedly stepped into the place of the great Figg, who had been accepted as a pet by the great people of his day, and sung as such by Mr. Pope and Mr. Bramston in some racy couplets. He opened another establishment in the Haymarket as an academy for imparting the principles of his interesting science to the noble youth of his times. Above all, he invented the boxing-gloves, or "mufflers," as he called them, and so made the initiation to the mysteries as easy as possible to his patrons. Mr. Broughton's advertisement of this subsidiary venture, which appeared in the *Advertiser* of February 1747, seems worth quoting:—

"Mr. Broughton proposes with proper assistance to open an academy at his house in the Haymarket for the instruction of those who are willing to be initiated in the mystery of boxing, where the whole theory and practice of that truly British art, with all the various blows, stops, cross buttocks, &c., incidental to combatants will be fully taught and explained; and that persons of quality and distinction may not be debarred from entering into a course of these lectures, they will be given with the utmost tenderness and regard to the delicacy of the frame and constitution of the pupil, for which reason mufflers will be provided that will effectually secure them from the inconveniency of black eyes, broken jaws, and bloody noses."

There is no doubt whatever that the "proper assistance" was duly forthcoming, and that Mr. Broughton's academy was prominent among the amusements of the youth of the London of George the Second until the final catastrophe overtook its proprietor.

It was mainly the confidence born of fatness and prosperity which led to Mr. Broughton's downfall; the proverbial danger to those who put their trust in princes also appeared in the disaster. The Duke of Cumberland continued his caressing of the pugilist, and had unlimited faith in his invulnerability. Broughton went to a race meeting, met with one Slack, a Norwich butcher, a pugilist of some note, but who had been well beaten by Taylor, who had, as we have seen, yielded the championship to the unconquered Broughton. Broughton in his pride threatened a horsewhipping to Slack as a settlement of the slight difference which had arisen between them on the racecourse. That gladiator replied with a challenge to a battle for £200 a side; the gate money, estimated at £600 clear, was added to the stake, and the challenge being duly accepted by the champion, the meeting was arranged for the 10th of April 1750. The fixture excited great interest in the sporting circles of that day, but the champion thought lightly of his risk, and "refused to take training preparation, although he had not fought for a long time." His only fear was that Slack would fail to appear, and he announced to his patrons on the eve of the combat that he had arranged to

present his opponent with ten pounds in order to make sure of his appearance.

No one of Broughton's following had any doubt of the issue, and the result of the first few minutes of the fighting only increased their confidence. The betting rose to ten to one on the champion, and his royal highness the duke gave the odds in thousands at that figure. Suddenly Mr. Slack made a surprising jump which nobody had anticipated—Mr. Broughton least of all—and dealt that hero a prodigious blow between the eyes, the very stroke, indeed, recommended so highly by Captain Godfrey. Mr. Broughton appeared stupefied, and seemed to be "feeling" for his man. His royal highness, apprehensive for his appalling odds of ten to one in thousands, called out with some lack of delicacy, "What are you about, Broughton? You can't fight; you're beat." Broughton replied, "I can't see my man, your highness; I'm blind, not beat. Let me see my man, and he shall not gain the day." Mr. Slack pursued his advantage, and pommelled the blinded man into submission "under fourteen minutes;" the duke lost his ten thousand pounds, swore he was sold, and turned his back on his pet of former years, and the whole incident is thoroughly typical of the amenities of the prize-ring, the nurse of the "British spirit" and the breeder of the true "British bottom."

It is curious to notice that as soon as the great man had discarded the pugilist, the authorities stepped in and closed Mr. Broughton's amphitheatre. We have

not discovered the reasons given for that step, no doubt the perennial charge which was brought up against pugilists during a century or more—the charge of a breach of the peace—was sufficient for the magistrate. In any case, Broughton lost the championship, and retired from the ring. One would like to believe the report that the duke pensioned him off and gave him a place among the yeomen of the guard. But that report does not find a place in his biography which we have quoted, and does not agree with some well-known anecdotes of his later years.

It was in such surroundings, and by the aid of such agencies as we have recalled, that the great institution of the London prize-ring took its origin. Broughton's rules gave the cult of pugilism a definite shape, and provided its professors with a ready-made code, which made the arrangement of their encounters the easier by saving an infinity of preliminary wrangling. But the interests of the whole fraternity suffered terribly from the consequences of Mr. Broughton's mishap with Slack, and from the delicate position in which that misfortune left his relations with the Duke of Cumberland. We saw the constables coming in and shutting up his establishment; the withdrawal of the royal countenance from its head had, we are afraid, a chilling effect upon the whole profession. One reads very little about the pugilists or the British spirit or the true British bottom in the few years which followed Mr. Broughton's disaster. The duke's sore-

ness about the loss of his £10,000 was no doubt quite sufficient to put the taste for boxing out of fashion among the youth of White's, who, to be sure, about this time were usually engaged in exploring the mysteries of hazard and faro. Boxing, in fact, languished; the reporters were silent in the columns of the *Advertiser* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*; and the great champion, Mr. Slack himself, found it advisable to take a trip in the provinces. We read of him at Bristol, at Acton Wells, in his own county of Norfolk, and elsewhere, fighting rustics, colliers, and Frenchmen, but always emerging victorious. The tradition of the prize-ring, indeed, fled to the country for a while, rested there to recuperate, and came back to London, refreshed and reinvigorated, some years later. If you are curious to explore the dreary records of these old provincial fights, one just like the other, you may read of encounters for small stakes taking place all over the country between those artless provincials with interesting and mechanical names—Bill the Nailer, Smiler the Bricklayer, Joe the Tinman, and the rest. The "fancy" in town remained under a cloud the while, and when, some seven years later, pugilism began to return, it was in a timid and tentative manner, and by way of the more sequestered villages near London—Hounslow or Putney or Islington.

It is not without interest to note that it was the patronage of the Duke of Cumberland which again revived the vogue of pugilism in London.

Slack had carried all before him in the provinces, and, for a space of ten years, after he had overthrown Broughton in his own establishment in the Haymarket, had been accepted as champion without challenge. But in 1760 the Duke of York, finding a likely-looking bruiser in one Bill Stevens, the Duke of Cumberland, his brother, was quite ready to make a match, and, not unnaturally, placed his confidence in the champion whom he had seen knock over Mr. Broughton and his own £10,000 at one blow. The princes made a match of it accordingly; a stage was set up in the Tennis Court, James's Street, Haymarket—a building which exists in an altered shape to this day—and the nominees of the royal sportsmen faced each other on the 17th June 1760. "Slack entered the field with all the confidence of a veteran," says Mr. Miles, quoting some older authority, we presume, "and was acknowledged to have the advantage in the first part of the battle; but the Nailer, with an arm like iron, received the ponderous blows of his antagonist with ease, while with his right arm he so punished the champion's nob that he knocked off the title, picked it up, and wore it." The Duke of Cumberland was thus a second time a loser by Slack, and it is not surprising to learn that his royal highness retired disgusted from the ring. It is a fact, too, which is indisputable, that the ring in London again languished for want of the royal support.

The modern apologists of the prize-ring who saw

so much virtue in its principles and practitioners, and deplored its exit within living memory almost with tears, are very ready to attribute the decline of the "fancy" to the enormities of raffishness and swindling which undoubtedly attended its later years. They are apt to contrast its last unhappy state with the virtue and innocence of its youth and prime, but with very little justification, as it would seem. Mr. Miles, for instance, who in "*Pugilistica*" lifts up a very eloquent voice in lamentation of the departed glory of the ring, supplies in his own pages very curious information about some of the earlier contests. In 1759 a fight between a boxer of a noted family, Joe James by name, and "Tom Falkner the Cricketer," was obviously sold by the former, "the indignation of the spectators being very highly expressed by their hissing him off the ground." A couple of years later another fight, arranged between Bill Stevens and George Meggs at the Tennis Court by such a pillar of the profession as the ex-champion Slack, was openly and shamelessly given away by Stevens, who owned to having received the stake of twenty guineas, and fifty guineas as well, from Slack, to lose the fight—Slack, of course, finding his account in the heavy backing of Meggs, whom he had trained. No one who knows much of the sporting personalities of the last century will be surprised to hear that Colonel O'Kelly bought Mr. Darts for the sum of £100 when he fought Mr. Corcoran at Epsom in 1771. Of a fight between Sellers and Duggan in

1780 we read "the battle lasted one minute and a half, when victory was declared in favour of Duggan; the amateurs were swindled to a large amount," and they included the promising young Prince of Wales and Mr. George Hanger.

The mention of those names is a reminder that the bruisers received much countenance from his royal highness and the young men who shared the pleasures of his youth, Mr. Hanger, Lord Barrymore, Col. Lake, St. Leger, and the rest. There was little patronage of the prize-ring and its doings to be expected from George the Third, and the countenance of his sons, including the distinguished patronage of the heir-apparent, came as a godsend to the "fancy," which was getting into bad odour. Although there was no longer any recognised amphitheatre in the town like the establishments of Taylor and Broughton, fights took place regularly at various points in the outskirts of London, Stepney Fields, Bloomsbury, Marylebone Fields, and at Islington and Blackheath. But the personnel of the fighters and of the bulk of their patrons had sadly deteriorated since the palmy days of Broughton and the duke. The ring was constantly recruited by roughs, drovers and bargemen, and was in great danger of losing what little respectability it had ever possessed. The interest which the royal youths began to take in its doings naturally brought a crowd of patrons of an assured social position. Fitzpatrick, the Duke of Hamilton, Windham, Sir Thomas Aprece, well-known men like Brady the eminent brewer, the Whig brewer



and good fellow Harvey Christian Combe, and scores of other less well-known men of substance and respectability, all supported the prince in his patronage of the ring. By great good fortune too, for its own interests, the profession at this time began to attract practitioners who were in all respects more reputable than their predecessors. There was the Jew Mendoza who replaced the crude brutalities of the earlier professors with a scientific system of boxing which was unknown before his day; Humphrys, whose manners and bearing earned him the title of the Gentleman; and Jackson, whose good-nature and good-humour, generosity and fine presence, seem almost to have entitled him to that distinction. As the century drew towards its close, it became the fashion to take an interest in the ring and its doings amongst men who had hitherto looked upon its vulgarities with contempt. White's and Brooks's did not disdain to put on the mufflers at Harry Angelo's in St. James's Street. The palmy days of the ring indeed were approaching when it became the fashion for a man of position to keep a tame prize-fighter of his own, the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Barrymore being two well-known patrons who enjoyed that luxury. It was the custom of the latter nobleman to introduce his gladiator to his guests after dinner at Wargrave, where they were allowed to judge the strength of his arm by the whizz of his fist an inch off their noses. By the time the 'nineties came in too, if you got into a street row or were hustled at Vauxhall, it was thought just as well to be

able to take your part with your fists, swords by that time being rarely worn.

The accounts of the battles of this period and of their circumstances do not show any marked difference from those of the earlier days, nor do they explain the fascination which the ring undoubtedly exercised upon men of birth and good breeding. We have noticed typical battles of the other times, however, and it may be of interest to consider for a moment the sort of thing to which votaries of prize-fighting exposed themselves even in its best days. Here, for example, is one incident of the fight between Gentleman Humphrys and Mendoza, which was arranged to take place at Mr. Thornton's park, at Stilton in Hunts., in the year 1782 :—

“In the twenty-second round Mendoza having struck at Humphrys, the latter dropped. The articles of agreement particularly specified that whichever combatant fell without a blow should lose the battle, consequently a general cry of ‘Foul, foul’ took place, and it was decided by Mendoza's friends that he had won the battle. Humphrys, Johnson, and the spectators interested in that side of the question contended it was fair, asserting that Humphrys had stopped the blow before he fell. The partizans on the opposite side as vehemently insisted on the contrary, and the whole was a scene of uproar and confusion. Sir Thomas Apreece as the umpire of Mendoza declared it foul, but Alderman Combe refused an opinion. During the affray Captain Brown, Mendoza's second, in a moment of irritation, called Johnson a liar and a blackguard, which was answered by the approach of Johnson in a stern and menacing manner. This led to the expectation of a bye-battle between the seconds. Humphrys came several times to his adversary calling on him to fight out the battle. After much wrangling, Mendoza was taunted into con-

tinuing, when Gentleman Humphrys violated the agreement unmistakably by going down to avoid a blow, and the stakes were awarded to the Jew."

This was no obscure encounter between two disreputable coalheavers or drovers, but a great fixture between the ornamental heads of the profession in the presence of the most select of its patrons.

Enthusiasts of the "fancy" point to this period, when Mendoza and Humphrys with their contemporary Jackson were its particular stars, as that in which the whole system attained its meridian. Men of assured position flocked to these encounters, and the ring began to count a large proportion of the male fashion of the day among its supporters. When Mr. Jackson, for example, fought his memorable battle with Mendoza at Hornchurch in 1795, and held that Semitic hero by the hair of his head as he pommelled him, a great number of the peerage made the journey to see that exciting spectacle. A little later when Mendoza met Lee at Grinstead Green there were present many famous men from the White's and Brooks's of that day, Lord Albermarle and General Keppel, Sir W. W. Wynne, Sir John Shelley, Mr. Thornhill, and Sir E. Nagle. There began to arise, too, among the bloods of those days a mild taste for physical exercise, not athletic by any means as yet, but still a step forward from the eternal lounging in card-rooms which had held the field as the main diversion of the young man about town for nearly a century. Mr. Charles Fox and his friends at Brooks's had made a fashion of an

affected negligence in dress, and the gradual disappearance of the laced ruffle, powdered wig, and embroidered waistcoat from the figures of the generous youth of the town and clubs made the change easier. The sporting young men of the period began to take an interest in driving and even in hunting, and to dress more like their stud grooms. Boxing as an exercise came to share in this gratifying movement, and it was reckoned the correct thing to put on the gloves with a professor at proper intervals.

The chief of these fashionable instructors was John Jackson, at his famous rooms No. 13 Bond Street, the friend and "corporeal pastor" of Byron, the "emperor of pugilism" and the model of all prize-fighters. Every one grew enthusiastic about Jackson, his manly beauty, his generosity, the astonishing fashion of his clients; "to attempt a list of which," says one scribe, "would be to copy one-third of the peerage." It is certain that some of the asperities of other periods of the ring were toned down by Jackson and his contemporaries. Mendoza was the first who made tours and gave sparring exhibitions, which did much to bring the use of the gloves into fashion. Jackson only fought three battles in his life, and established his great reputation upon those few professional engagements. His fortune was made by the *bona fide* teaching of boxing in his saloons in Bond Street, where Byron capered round with his lame foot and fondly believed he had the makings of a pugilist in him. His lordship talks of a "pugilistic club," and was

very delighted to dine with Mr. Thomas Cribb, another of the champions of the early years of the century. By 1814 boxing with gloves had come so much into fashion under these distinguished auspices of patron and professor, that the allied sovereigns were regaled with an exhibition, and Mr. Jackson was dragged out of his retirement to make sport for those potentates and for old Blucher and Platoff and the others at Lord Lowther's in Pall Mall, and at Mr. Angelo's fencing rooms in St. James's Street. Later still, when his Majesty King George the Fourth came to the throne, that monarch, apprehensive, perhaps, of the way in which his subjects would regard his relations with his queen, testified to the esteem in which he held the profession which had owed so much to his patronage by employing its chief professors as a sort of bodyguard at the ceremony of the coronation. A band of those gladiators, headed by Mr. Jackson and resplendent in the scarlet and gold livery of the royal pages, were told off to keep the ring, so to speak, on that exciting day. His Majesty presented a single gold medal to the body to commemorate the occasion, and the prize-fighters decided to raffle the royal token, which was won by Mr. Cribb.

Boxing, indeed, was in the air, and was much cultivated by the crowds of idle men of fashion who were set free and provided with leisure by the great peace which followed Waterloo. Besides Jackson's rooms, the Fives Court in St. Martin's Street, Leicester Fields, was another great place of resort for the amateurs.

Here was set up a stage, and here all the noted professors of the art gave exhibitions of sparring with gloves to crowded and delighted audiences at three shillings a head. There are famous prints of the Fives Court with the whole "fancy" of the period displayed at their favourite diversion. It was, indeed, a very famous lounge of the Regency and George the Fourth, and its exhibitions were very innocent, and if the prize-ring had confined itself to such contests, real exhibitions of the "noble art of self-defence," it would never have encountered an enemy in the world.

The club which Lord Byron mentioned in his diary as "increasing daily" was undoubtedly the Pugilistic Society, and was another evidence of the great popularity of the prize-ring and of pugilism in London during the first quarter of the present century. The Pugilistic Society was an organisation which aimed at supplying for the prize-ring the authority which the Jockey Club has given to the turf or the Marylebone Club to cricket. The inimitable Pierce Egan, to whom we are indebted for its early particulars, gave it a greater ambition. According to Mr. Egan its "great object is to keep alive the principles of courage and hardihood which have distinguished the British character, and to check the progress of that effeminacy which wealth is too apt to produce." Anyway, it held its first meeting at the Thatched House on the 22nd May 1814. Sir Harry Smith was in the chair, and Lord Yarmouth made a speech on the

occasion. There were stirring events abroad in 1814, which, as we know, had a more or less fortunate conclusion for this country, and his lordship was pleased to see in the cult of pugilism a very good reason for the happy military posture in which we then found ourselves. The members of the society imposed upon themselves the duty of hunting out of the ring all degenerate professors who sold battles to the betting men; they gave purses of from ten to fifty guineas in order to encourage a continuance of battles in out-of-the-way parts of the country; they had stakes and ropes of their own, with P.C. marked on them; and they wore "a uniform dress of blue coats and yellow kersey-mere waistcoats, with P.C. engraved on their buttons."

This institution displayed the fashionable side of pugilism; another which was probably more interesting was Daffy's Club, held at Mr. Tom Belcher's at the Castle Tavern, Holborn. At Daffy's Club the "fancy" gathered once a week, and the most noble patrons of the ring did not disdain to appear on occasion and take their glass of spirits and water with the professors of the art. You may read all about Daffy's in that extraordinary work, "The London Spy," by Bernard Blackmantle, otherwise Mr. Westmacott, the book which now produces such figures at Sotheby's by virtue of the delightful aquatints and wood-engravings by Mr. Robert Cruikshank which illustrate its pages. There is a very carefully drawn plate of Daffy's among those, and its portraits have more real eloquence than the dreary prose of its facetious author. "Jemmy

Soares," we learn, "was the president of the club, Lucky Bob made a 'nation good vice," there are the "immortal typo, the all-accomplished Pierce Egan," Tom Spring with his cock bag, Watts with the Duck Lane Dossman, Brother Adey, the heroes Scroggins and Turner, and many more, all looking out of Mr. Cruikshank's able aquatint.

That same extraordinary phraseology reminds us that Mr. Westmacott formed his style upon that of the "immortal typo," Mr. Pierce Egan, in whom the ring found its high priest and its oracle, and in whose prose English style surely sank to depths which it has never reached before or since. It may be said of Mr. Pierce Egan that he touched nothing which he did not disfigure. He took the plain tales of all the reporters of pugilism from the earliest days, the honest and enthusiastic sentences of Captain Godfrey, the quaint paragraphs of the news-sheets of the middle of the century, the sober pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Annual Register*, the works of the writers on pugilism of his own contemporaries, like the anonymous author of "Pancratia," and he converted them all into that astonishing concoction which he called "Boxiana," and the idea of which he purloined from poor Mr. Smeeton. The English language, as we contend, has never been distorted as it was in the hands of "the immortal typo," Mr. Pierce Egan, with his cant expressions in italics, his jokes in capitals so that you may not miss them, his fawning upon those in high places, his drearily facetious banter of those who

were not. Mr. Miles in "Pugilistica" has followed Pierce over the same ground, and you may there read how he has played as much havoc with the matter of those early historians as he has with their manner, expanding a few words into a circumstantial paragraph, and exchanging their simple statements of fact for his own inaccurate imaginings. And yet Pierce Egan had a prodigious success. His "Life in London," which to-day seems the dreariest of his performances, took London by storm, and fascinated every youth of the day who was pining for the delights of the town. Thackeray himself tells us of the fascination which that wondrous tale of Tom and Jerry, Logic and Corinthian Kate, had for his generous but youthful mind; of the disillusionment also which came, thank goodness, upon a later reading. But Egan, as we say, was the very figurehead of the "fancy" at any time between Waterloo and the accession of her present Majesty, and they both seem worthy of each other, the theme of the historian and the historian of the theme.

As we have quoted descriptions of the early encounters, we select extracts of two accounts of the times we are considering as illustrative of the change which Mr. Egan brought into the literature of the prize-ring. The first describes some rounds in the contest between Mr. Gully and Mr. Gregson, fought at Sir John Sebright's park, in Hertfordshire, in the year 1808—a very typical battle of the great period, which drew thousands of patrons of the ring as spectators:—

"Round 1. The combatants both sparred about a minute, the utmost silence prevailed in every part of the ring, and every one had his eye fixed steadily on the contending champions. Here Gully displayed one of the most signal specimens of the art of boxing that perhaps ever was witnessed, by putting in two most dextrous hits through his opponent's guard in the mouth and throat at the same moment. Gregson fell like a log and was instantly covered with blood. The greatest commotion was now excited, and peal succeeded peal of applause. The odds were six to four on Gully.

Round 3. Gregson successfully planted a hit in Gully's breast and rallied, but Gully had the advantage of putting in most blows although Gregson threw him. Gregson's head had now begun to swell, and he continued to bleed freely. Odds two to one on Gully.

Round 6. At the close of the round Gregson put in a tremendous blow on the side of his adversary's head, and both fell out of the ring.

Rounds 7 and 8. Gully rallied, put in six successive hits on Gregson's head, and at length knocked him off his legs. . . . Gregson's left eye was now almost closed, his nose broken, the blood flowed copiously, and his head was most hideously disfigured.

Round 9. Gregson evinced distress, and Gully hit him again severely on the face. Gregson fell on his knees.

Round 12. Gregson struck Gully on the breast, who immediately knocked him off his legs by a flush hit in the mouth.

Round 17. In this round Gregson became intemperate and ran in upon his adversary, who continued hitting him and avoiding him in a most surprising manner. Gregson twice turned his back upon his opponent and made towards the ropes, but Gully followed him, changed his front, fibbed him, and kept him from falling until he had hit him into an almost senseless state, and then dropped him gently between his arms.

Round 27. Gregson was brought down by a heavy blow under the ear, and the twenty-eighth round decided the contest, Gregson being too much exhausted to be brought to the mark in time. The battle lasted one hour and a quarter."

This is a plain tale of the reporter's, and obviously true, and we may discover how much of the noble science of self-defence there was displayed in Mr. Gully's exposition of its pleasing intricacies. Now let us listen to a much shorter epic by Mr. Pierce Egan:—

“1. The men came to the scratch with good-humour painted on their mugs.

2. Vipond came up bleeding from the left ogle, not quite so confident, but nothing loth, and wishing to pay with interest the favour received. But, alas! he was not the first man disappointed in good intentions, for he was met in so tremendous a manner by Pat's right hand on the temple, that he was sent to the ground as if kicked by a horse.

3. Paddy brought him to his recollection by a blow on the victualling office, following it up with another on the box of knowledge.

4. Vipond's ivory box was visited by Pat's left mawley. . . . Unfortunately for Matthew there was a magnetic attraction between Paddy's left and the Lancashire man's frontispiece which kept the claret continually streaming.”

The fight was an unimportant one between Langan and Vipond, and we quote it only as an illustration of Mr. Egan's style, but this was the sort of stuff which delighted the sportsmen of those days, inspired half the writers of *Bell's Life* for the next twenty years, and secured for Mr. Egan's *chef d'œuvre* “Boxiana” a place in “every gentleman's library.”

That same Mr. Gully, who in the sober report of the first quoted of our authorities “most hideously disfigured” Mr. Gregson, was the other great figure of the most reputable period of the ring, that of

Humphrys, Mendoza, and Jackson. He remains to this day the shining example of what virtues may be engendered in its bracing atmosphere, a veritable industrious apprentice of the "fancy." He fought only three battles in his life, but diligent in the business which engaged his later years, he lived to stand before princes. "After a few years passed in the occupation of a tavern-keeper," we read, "he was so fortunate in turf speculations, and so well served by sound judgment in racing matters, that he retired and became the purchaser of Ware Park, Hertfordshire. Here he associated with the first circles in the county." Mr. Gully's social and sporting successes were indeed only a step to further greatness, to the ownership of collieries in Yorkshire, and to the representation in the first Reformed Parliament of the borough of Pontefract, an event which provided Mr. James Smith with some poetic inspiration:—

"You ask me the cause that made Pontefract sully
Her fame by returning to Parliament Gully.
The etymological cause I suppose is
His breaking the bridges of so many noses."

One hears little but good about Mr. Gully, and some of his contemporaries were much impressed by the splendours of his hospitality. Says one of his biographers who had sat at his table, "the turbot came by express from Billingsgate, and the haunch from his own park; Moët purveyed the champagne, Marjoribanks the port, and Griffiths the Lafitte. We

had no skulking host, be assured, but the most entertaining and liberal one alive."

We believe that the fashionable craze among the amateurs in London for the practice of boxing was not of very long duration, and that it was soon eclipsed by the real interest of pugilism for its true votaries, that of seeing two courageous men knock each other out of time with the naked fist. The Fives Court in St. Martin's Lane and the Tennis Court in the Haymarket were still great institutions it is true, but they were attended by amateurs in the capacity of spectators only and not as partakers in the fierce joys of the "set-to." These institutions provided exhibitions where new aspirants for pugilistic honours displayed their abilities with the "mufflers," and where the graduates of the prize-ring took their benefits, a function where the stage was occupied by a succession of the most eminent professors of the art punching each other in pairs, and where the beneficiary himself made his bow and speech of thanks to his patrons, who signified their approval of his past by an eleemosynary shower of half-crowns which fell upon the stage. Disputes as to the terms of forthcoming contests were arranged with much eloquence on the stage of the Fives Court by trainers and seconds, who piloted aspirants (for a consideration) through the dangers, financial and otherwise, which they had themselves passed. The Fives Court indeed came to be the centre of the professional interest of the ring, until in more modern times the editor and staff of *Bell's*

Life, the forerunner of our own sedate *Field*, practically took the organisation of the London prize-ring into their own keeping.

The more fashionable members of the "fancy" were accustomed to gather at Limmer's Hotel; Limmer's still standing, but translated from the Limmer's of those days; Limmer's where the traditions of the eighteenth-century coffee-house lingered latest, the Limmer's celebrated in song:—

"My name is John Collins, head waiter at Limmer's,
Corner of Conduit Street, Hanover Square;
My chief occupation is filling of brimmers
For spicy young gentlemen frequenting there."

Here the great powers of the ring, the patrons who found the stakes which sent the pugilists off to their trainers, and alone made possible the classic encounters of those days, forgathered, and manipulated the figures at the Fives Court. "Full many a well-known pugilist, with Michael Angelo nose and square-cut jaw, has stood cap in hand at the door of that historical coffee-room, within which Lord Queensberry, then Lord Drumlanrig, and Captain W. Peel, and the late Lord Strathmore were taking their meals. In one window stand Colonel Ouseley Higgins, Captain Little, and Major Hope Johnston. A servant of the major's with an unmistakable fighting face enters with a note for his master. It is from Lord Longford and Sir St. Vincent Cotton, asking him to allow his valet to be trained by Johnny Walker for a proximate prize-fight." So writes a very interesting contributor to

a magazine speaking of a day a little later than that we are recalling. But we may place the patrons of the ring from Waterloo to Inkerman with the greatest propriety at Limmer's, a period which would include such lights of the "fancy" as Parson Ambrose, Colonel Berkeley, Sir Edward Kent, the Myttons, Captain Barclay, Lord Pomfret, Squire Osbaldestone, Lord Longford, Lord Winchilsea, and Lord George Bentinck.

To complete our survey of the organisation of the London prize-ring during the first half of the present century, we must add to the institutions we have already described a whole group of what were known as "sporting houses" scattered all over the town. The sporting houses were public-houses kept by retired prize-fighters, trainers, seconds, or other individuals who had been connected with the prize-ring in their earlier days. A chief part of the business of the proprietor of a sporting house was to "give the office," that is, to furnish to the properly qualified member of the "fancy" the latest intelligence as to the movements of the principals in a forthcoming fight and of the police who were dogging them. Prize-fights were no longer possible near the town, except, as it were, by accident. But the location of a forthcoming battle, the exact hour, the best means of reaching the place of the encounter, the state of the odds on the combatants, and other information of a like interest might always be had at the nearest sporting house by any *bona fide* member of the fraternity.

The Three Tuns off Seven Dials was the typical sporting house of the central district of the town, where there was a constant procession of male fashion from St. James's to consult the old oracle Alec Keene, and every quarter of the town had a similar place of resort well known to all local patrons of the ring, and of which lists were regularly published in the sporting periodicals. With the improved organisation of the police, London had become the headquarters only of operations which were conducted on lines of secrecy in sequestered parts of the home counties, and imitated on a smaller scale in the provinces by organisations of a similar character in the great towns like Birmingham and Manchester.

It is worthy of observation that the whole noble science of self-defence had been in strife with the legal authorities ever since the constables went to shut up Mr. Broughton's Amphitheatre after the Duke of Cumberland lost his £10,000 in 1760, and that the whole organisation of the ring had grown up in defiance of the law. That strife continued, indeed, to the end of the chapter, when the police stepped in and prevented the finish of that greatest of all encounters, the heroic struggle between Heenan and Sayers at Woking just forty years ago. But the war had gone, on the whole, in favour of the authorities, and had produced a state of things which limited the enjoyment of the "fancy" in London itself mainly to the organisation of campaigns in districts where the police were less well organised or more com-

placent. The newspapers are full of long descriptive accounts of the periodical expeditions made by the "fancy" into the provinces on these occasions. As soon as "the office" had been given to the initiated at the sporting houses of Holborn, Soho, Houndsditch or Chelsea, and the date and place of meeting determined beyond any reasonable doubt, the "fancy," chiefly on horseback, started off on a pilgrimage to the favoured spot. Three days were often spent on the journey when the tactics of the enemy had driven the suffering profession very far afield, to the Sussex or Hampshire downs for instance, Salisbury Plain or the fens of Cambridgeshire. There are most humorous accounts of these old expeditions to be dug out of the quarries of the old sporting papers in the newspaper room at the Museum; tales of advance and retreat, of strategical manœuvring over two or three counties, of dreadful losses at the hands of brigands in the shape of innkeepers and postmasters. A very typical campaign of this description was that which preceded the classic battle between Mr. Gully and Mr. Gregson, the faithful reporter of which we have already quoted.

The contest had been arranged to take place at a rural spot about two miles from Woburn. The Marquess of Buckingham, however, who was evidently a degenerate outsider, objected as *custos rotulorum* of the county to the engagement taking place within his jurisdiction, and issued an edict against it. The "fancy," nevertheless, flocked to Woburn and the adjacent villages during the two days preceding the

date of the fixture, until all that pleasant vicinage hummed like a hive. The Marquess got out his bench of magistrates, his *posse comitatus*, his constables, and his Dunstable volunteers, "with drums beating, flags, cartouche boxes double provided, bayonets fixed, and all in military array, until the peasants thought the French had landed," as the reporter of the *Morning Chronicle* faithfully records. At Woburn, on the second evening, thirty shillings a head was the price claimed and realised for a night's shakedown in a kitchen by the thrifty inhabitants, who thoughtfully removed the boots of their guests as security for the payment. "There were fifteen gentlemen," we read, "laid on the floor of one room, and hundreds reposed in their carriages." On the morning of the third day a ring was thrown up on Ashley Common, and between six and seven A.M. "many of the amateurs came dashing direct from London." Bill Richmond was at the "Magpie" to direct the favoured ones to the proper spot; the multitude soon got "the office" and "followed the bang up leaders" to the common. Mr. Mendoza there rode up to the assembled "fancy" and solemnly assured them that the Marquess and his magistrates would prevent the fight at that spot. The expectant multitude followed that eminent man, who was training Gregson, to his own inn, "where they found the hero seated in Lord Barrymore's barouche with the horses turned towards Woburn, and escorted by about a hundred and fifty noblemen and gentlemen on horseback and an immense retinue of gigs, tandems,

and curricles of every species of vehicle." It appears that several other places had been selected for the exhibition, in the event of any unfortunate interference, such as the Marquess's, taking place. The first of these was Sir John Sebright's park in Hertfordshire, seventeen miles from Ashley, and the reporter assures us, with some generosity of imagination, no doubt, that the whole seventeen miles were covered with one solid mass of passengers. "Broken-down carriages obstructed the road, knocked-up horses fell and could not be got any further, and many hundreds of gentlemen were happy in being jolted in brick-carts for a shilling a mile." They most of them reached Sir John Sebright's demesne by two o'clock, however, where the ring was formed; "the exterior circle was nearly an acre, surrounded by a triple ring of horsemen and a double row of pedestrians, who, notwithstanding the wetness of the ground, lay down with great pleasure, and the forty-foot ring was soon completed." The incidents of these wanderings and of the contest we have already described are, as we say, quite typical of a hundred prize-fights organised from London during the pre-railway era of modern England.

There was a slight change of tactics in later times, rendered necessary by railways, telegrams, and the improved organisation of the police, but the strategy remained the same. The base lay in London between Limmer's, the Pugilistic Association, and the Fives Court, with outposts in the sporting houses of the suburbs, and the campaign was directed along the

strategical lines of railway where local considerations determined the exact sites of its battlefields. Sometimes this was only decided on the train itself; the railway companies were monstrously polite to the "fancy" in those days; the special train would run on past a waiting band of constables into the next county until a sequestered field was reached, disgorge its combatants, ring-makers, and horde of riff-raff, run on to the next station and return for the whole caravan after the issue had been decided. Another favourite plan was to hire a steamer or two at some down-river jetty, take the train there, embark on the waiting flotilla, and pitch a ring on some presentable spot near the water's edge, in one of the desolate marshes of the estuary, on Canvey Island, or on the embankment of the river itself below Long Reach. There were dolorous complaints against Jews from Houndsditch who, having got "the office," chartered other steamers, filled them at half-prices, and diluted the chaste circles of the real "fancy" with the vulgarity of the East End. By the time that her Majesty came to the throne a successful meeting, which was not unduly harassed by the police, would assemble as many as thirty or forty thousand people, anticipating, indeed, the vast crowds which gather to watch a match of the Football League to-day. The two fixtures had other points of similarity, in that the referee often went in danger of his life.

The actual incidents of the fighting itself differed little through all these years from the incidents of the

earlier contests. There is a strange similarity between the accounts of one combat and another in the columns of the *Sporting Magazine* and of *Bell's Life in London*. The style of the reporters alone changed with the years, and variations upon the chaste model of Mr. Pierce Egan enriched the language with a delightful play of phrase and synonym. The odds were stated in quaint terms. It was "Chelsea Hospital to a sentry-box" on the Deaf 'Un, or the "Glass-case of '51 to a cucumber-frame" that the Tipton Slasher beat Tom Paddock. The faces of the heroes were "frontis-pieces" or "dial-plates"; their mouths "potato-traps" or "gin-traps," or "kissers," or "ivory-boxes"; their heads "nuts," "nobs," or "knowledge-boxes"; their blood "currant juice" or "claret"; their eyes "ogles" or "optics"; their stomachs "bread-baskets" or "victualling offices"; their noses "conks," "snouts," or "smellers." It is only when we read the epics written in such language as this that we realise what we have lost in the prize-ring.

The style of the recording angels of the "fancy" thus changed, as we say, but the subject-matter which inspired them remained much as it had been in the days of Broughton and Slack. Training became better understood, indeed, and the encounters as a consequence were much prolonged, both by reason of an improved defence and of the stamina which was acquired by the abstemiousness of the improved training. Bendigo and Caunt fought ninety-three rounds in September of 1845, and would have fought

more but for the bludgeoning of one of the combatants by the mob; Sayers fought Pineson to a finish through one hundred and nine rounds, lasting three hours and eight minutes, in January of 1856; fights of fifty and sixty rounds were the rule. Punishment was undoubtedly more severe for men trained to endure such ordeals as these, and deaths in the ring were not uncommon. Turner killed Curtis at Moulsey Hirst in 1816; in 1833 Byrne at St. Albans was carried off dead after ninety-three rounds in three hours and sixteen minutes with Deaf Burke. But all these contests, as we say, differed only in degree from those reported by Captain Godfrey, and it is in the reports of exactly similar encounters, varied only by the style of the reporters through a century and a half, that the history of the prize-ring is recorded.

That curious institution, whose history we have attempted to summarise, had, as we have seen, a surprising vogue, and that among men who were accomplished in many ways and eminent in many walks of life. Enthusiasts claim Mr. Charles James Fox as a supporter of the ring; they are certainly entitled to Mr. Windham, who supported the institution in Parliament, as he did those of bull and bear baiting, because, as he believed, it fostered the "British spirit." A man of a different stamp, the Lord Althorp of the Reform Bill, whose personal character inspired the trust both among his own adherents and among his opponents, which alone made

the passage of that great measure possible, made a very curious confession of faith to Speaker Denison. Lord Althorp was a boxer himself, and he declared "that he had carefully considered whether it was not a duty which he owed to the public to attend every prize-fight which took place so as to encourage the noble science to the extent of his power." And yet he himself described how he had seen "Mendoza knocked down for the first five or six rounds by Humphrys, and seeming almost beaten until the Jews had got their money on, when a hint being given he began in earnest and soon turned the table," a proceeding which was surely on a moral equality with pulling a horse in a race, which his lordship would certainly have deprecated. Breezy politicians like Melbourne and Palmerston were, of course, staunch upholders of the ring; Palmerston especially, who intimated in the House of Commons that although the lawyers did not agree with him, he could not see how it was that the peace was broken by two pugilists who had no quarrel or animosity between them.

It all seems very strange now, the place prize-fighting filled in the lives of many people still alive, and the entire lack of any regret for its disappearance at the present time. Listen to Professor Wilson, who devoted one of his famous papers in the *Noctes* to the subject. Crusty Christopher was in one of his most confident and oracular moods. "The English are the most courageous people in the world, and they have

chosen of their own accord to settle such differences as cannot be settled otherwise, to be settled with the fist. I regard pugilism as one of the chief causes and effects of the 'British spirit.' I laid emphasis, James, on the words 'British spirit,' and I lay emphasis on the words 'fairplay.' But there are fools, and I suspect knaves eke are they, who while they have not the audacity to libel the whole people nor choose to have their own filthy lick-spittle blown back in their own faces from

'The bold peasantry, the country's pride,'

assembled at rural feast and festival all over Merrie England, squirt their venom like toads from holes at the London Ring, and seem to think that the legislature will listen to the croak of incarcerated reptiles."

The real issues were, of course, avoided in this choice rhetoric. The fairplay upon which Mr. Wilson laid such emphasis became impossible when the betting, which was the mainspring of the whole organisation of the prize-ring, was allowed to inspire such outrages as were the common incidents of its meetings. The fight between Caunt and Bendigo was, as we have seen, stopped by ruffians who had money to lose by the defeat of one of the combatants. The referee at Doncaster in 1831 had to withdraw Brown in his fight with Sampson after he had been kicked in the eye by one of the "fancy" and beaten on the head with a stake until his life was endangered. The Fairplay

Club itself was an organisation of bruisers which had its headquarters in the editorial sanctum of *Bell's Life*, the object of which was to keep a ring for the combatants by the attendance of its members armed with metal-mounted hunting-stocks. Fairplay could not have been so common among the "fancy" when such an organisation as the Fairplay Club was necessary.

As to the British spirit, the British people might still settle their real disputes with the fist, when the occasion arose, without the assistance of the prize-ring; such happy arrangements were surely independent of the professional prize-fight, where two men with no quarrel between them broke each other's jaws and beat each other blind and insensible, only to provide a spectacle and an occasion for gambling for a set of rowdies, who were careful to preserve their own skins from the same danger. We are happy to think that the British spirit has survived such nurses and such circumstances as these, and that interest in the prize-fight has been exchanged for a more healthy interest in more healthy forms of athletics. It is certainly a matter for rejoicing that the only trace of the old passion for the "milling match" to be recognised to-day appears in those gatherings at the sporting clubs of the West End, where degenerate youths contend in light gloves for the opportunity of the knock-out blow.

CHAPTER X

THE PARKS

WHEN in the year 1536 King Henry the Eighth persuaded, by means perfectly understood at the time, "the Right Reverend Father in God, William Boston, and the Convent of Westminster," to make over to him "the scyte, soyle, circuyte and procyncte of the Manor of Hyde" in exchange for the priory of Hurley in Berks, he established a tradition of pleasure which has clung to the manor of Hyde ever since. The motives which induced his Majesty thus to pack off the abbot and monks to the provinces appear plainly enough in the royal proclamation issued in the same month with the Act of Parliament which completed the transfer, "with their whole assent, consent and agreement," as is quaintly recited in the statute. "As the King's most Royal Majesty," says the proclamation, "is desirous to have the games of hare, partridge, pheasant and heron preserved in and about the honour of his palace of Westminster for his own disport and pastime, no person, on the pain of imprisonment of their bodies and further punishment at his Majesty's will and pleasure, is to presume to hunt or hawk from the Palace of Westminster to St.

Giles' in the Fields, and from thence to Islington, to our Lady of the Oak, to Highgate, to Hornsey Park, and to Hampstead Heath."

Such a proclamation serves to remind us what a very modern nation modern England is. The successive lifetimes of only four or five old men would form a chain which might connect our own with a time when Henry coursed hares, and flushed pheasants and herons for Anne Boleyn's tiercels in a royal chase which began on the banks of the Thames and included the present Hyde, St. James's, Green and Regent's Parks, together with the square miles of unlovely bricks and mortar which to-day cover the western and northern suburbs of London. In his present surroundings it is a pleasant occupation for the jaded citizen to think, now and then, of a wild pleasaunce stretching over that wide area, a country of woods and thickets and forest glades, springs and marshy pools, peopled by wild creatures only, and its silence little disturbed except when the "King's most Royal Majesty," with Anne on her palfrey and her train of ladies, rode through its valleys and uplands, with London, little bigger than a modern county town, lying purple in the distance in the hollow by the river between the Tower and the Savoy. Above all, the Londoner of to-day may thank his stars that so much of that open space has been rescued from those same bricks and mortar, and reserved, as it has been, for the "disport and pastime" of the lieges of Henry's successors.

For sport, or pleasure, or merrymaking for one class or another of Londoners have controlled the destiny of the parks, and of Hyde Park especially, ever since that memorable year when Henry laid out his happy hunting-ground. The young Edward the Sixth was there accustomed to give great hunting parties to the foreign ambassadors. The traditions of pleasure which we find clinging to the parks in no way suffered at the hands of Queen Elizabeth, who erected great stands both in Hyde and Marylebone Parks (the last of which we to-day know as Regent's Park) for the better viewing of the chase by herself and her guests. The love of sport which so often took King James the First to the parks, with Jowler and Jewel and the rest of the favourite pack, was not the least agreeable quality of that monarch's character in the eyes of his English subjects. Charles the First certainly had in mind the capabilities of Hyde Park as a pleasure-ground rather than its utility, when he revoked a permission given to an enterprising gentleman of Chelsea to convey the water of its springs to the inhabitants of Westminster, upon the representation of his keepers that such a proceeding would interfere with his Majesty's deer. It may be counted also to Charles for righteousness that, without any pressure at all, he admitted his subjects to share the pleasures of the royal demesne, and by generously throwing open its gates to the public dedicated Hyde Park to the enjoyment of the people "for ever."

It little affects our proposition of the continued

tradition of pleasure in Hyde Park, that in the troubled days which followed, the Parliament converted it into a huge entrenched camp, with bastions and earthworks on the site of the present Hamilton Place and of the Marble Arch; or that a few years later a resolution of the House of Commons decreed "that Hyde Park be sold for ready money," and that the Park, its timber and its deer, were disposed of in three lots for about £18,000. It only followed that the speculators who bought the ground calculated upon the existing popularity of the place as a playground, and imposed a price for admission. Londoners still drove their coaches and rode their nags in Hyde Park in the spring, grumbled sadly, but paid their shillings and sixpences nevertheless, and flocked there as usual to flirt and ogle in its drives, or to watch the horse matches and chariot races, the foot races and the games of hurling, which had a surprising vogue from the very year the gates were opened to the public. There was little real interruption of the gaiety of which Hyde Park was the chosen retreat, and the traditions of the Restoration were in no way violated when the enterprising purchasers of the royal property found their titles treated as null and void by the courts of law.

That same epoch of the Restoration marks the first great period of Hyde Park as a public pleasure-ground. All classes had been quick to appreciate the value of a breezy open place, where fashion, jaded in the stuffy rooms and playhouses of the London of

that day, could forgather in its chariots or on its horses, exchange its repartees, and gaze over an open country right on to the hills of Surrey and Kent on the one hand, and to the northern heights of London on the other. To the attractions of foot races and horse matches which drew crowds of the people to the Park, came to be added that of a rendezvous of fashion, which never fails to draw the great world and the aspiring body which hangs ever on its skirts, to any place which a freak or fad of its leaders may indicate as worthy of its notice. Here was a spot near the town where birds sang and wild flowers grew—a spot in those days much less suburban than Richmond and Hampton to-day. And so we find people of condition flocking to Hyde Park from the first. Even in the dark days of the Puritan ascendancy there is record of Cromwell himself in the Park, where he came near to grief in attempting the driving of a coach and six; used the whip too much, as one might expect of him, was flung on the coach pole, and from there to the ground, with his foot in the tackling, “and was carried a good while in that posture, during which time a pistol went off in his pocket.” The whole incident pleased the faithful vastly, and was the occasion of some bad verse from the royalist scribes.

The world of fashion of the Restoration being a body of small proportions compared with that of to-day, a much smaller space served for its exercises. Any man or woman entering Hyde Park, either by

the Oxford Road or from Piccadilly, made for a spot which lay about midway between the entrances from those avenues. A few hundred yards due north of the Royal Humane Society's present building, probably at the very spot where to-day converge the six or seven footpaths crossing the Park in that neighbourhood, was fenced in a circular space of some three hundred yards in diameter. Round the circumference of this space ran a carriage road, the whole being enclosed in a rough fence of stakes and rails. The fence and the means of watering this rather primitive promenade, which was used by the best blood of England, often excited the derision of the intelligent foreigner; the road was extremely dusty as a rule, and the water-cart was merely a large cask on wheels with the bung withdrawn.

The great function of the promenade in "the Ring," as the enclosure was called, took place in the small area we have described, and it consisted merely of a traversing of this circular road in one direction on horseback or in a coach, at the time when another row of horses and coaches traversed it in the other. There were thus two concentric rings of beauty and fashion continually passing each other. No stopping was allowed unless King Charles himself pulled up, which, to be sure, he often did when the proper lady appeared in the other circle. It was the mode to exchange witticisms with the acquaintances you saw for a moment in passing from your coach window or your saddle, and it requires little imagination to recall

the nature of much of that badinage during the palmy days of the Restoration.

It is very easy to trace the increasing fashion of the Ring in Hyde Park in the records of those days. Its pleasures were the theme of the Grub Street poetasters; and it went hard but that a Restoration playwright dragged in a scene placed in the Ring into half the comedies he wrote. The news-sheets would not describe a review of troops without opposing the eyes of Myra or Sacharissa in the Ring to the deadly weapons of the Guards. Anonymous Puritans flooded the town with what they called "satyrs" on the place, and the customs which flourished there; they held up to eternal perdition the chin chucking of orange girls by the beaux, the delivery of *billets doux* between lovers by the same convenient means, the appalling thickness of the paint on the ladies' faces. The diarists, with Pepys and Evelyn at their head, are eloquent on the subject of the Ring. Pepys was there constantly, or wishing himself there, when a fine day elsewhere reminded him of the amenities of the place. He tells us that "the Dukes of York and Gloucester do haunt the place much," which was quite a good reason for the aspiring Samuel to affect the same locality. You may, if you like, imagine with the greatest propriety most of the originals of those simpering beauties of Lely taking a turn in the Ring—Castlemaine, Stewart, Hamilton, Chesterfield, and the rest. Pepys will give you particulars of Castlemaine "lying impudently on her back in the

coach asleep with her mouth open," or driving in yellow satin "with a pinner on," and ogling the king, in another coach in the other circle, dreadfully; or riding on a white palfrey with a crimson velvet saddle and a gold bridle, and pulling up for a chat with his Majesty for a whole hour with all London looking on and waiting to go on with their promenade. You may see in the annals of that day how her ladyship, or another like her, would drive into the Ring with a handsome young actor from the playhouse in the very dress he had worn on the stage in the early afternoon performances of those days, or begin an intrigue with a fashionable author by leaning from her coach and abusing him roundly, as when the Castlemaine gave great hopes to the handsome Wycherley by the greeting, "Sir, you're a rascal; you're a villain." De Grammont will tell you of the dreadful struggle between the Castlemaine and the Stewart for the first ride in the Ring in the king's new coach from Paris, with the glass windows—the coach which had been built for his Majesty by the Duc de Guise for two thousand guineas.

Turning again to Mr. Pepys' pleasant gossip we may trace the origin of the lady's riding-habit, which first appeared in the Ring on the fair persons of the "Amazones," as he calls them; "ladies with coats and doublets and deep skirts," says Samuel, "just for all the world like mine, and their doublets buttoned up their breasts, with periwigs and with hats, so that only for a long petticoat dragging under their men's

coats nobody would take them for women in any point whatever." All the splendour of that irregular court and the fashion and beauty of those days were indeed focussed upon that circle of three hundred yards diameter in the Park; the deer were banished to the north-west corner, and as all thoughts of the utility of the pastures came gradually to be superseded by considerations of pleasure, Hyde Park was made over as a playground to Londoners of all classes who had time and inclination to take their pleasure there.

The promenade in the Ring strikes the busy man of to-day as a very ponderous function. By the time England had settled down under Anne and the first George a fashionable turnout in the Park had become a serious undertaking. The private coach of that day was a sprawling structure as large as a modern hearse, its ugly body hung on straps between widely separated legs, and its team no less than six grey Flanders mares. Its panels bore the quarterings of the coats-of-arms of its owners on a generous scale, and its coachmen and footmen were in liveries of a splendour which survives only to-day in those of the Mansion House. It was only the magnate of an assured position who could turn out in proper style in the Ring; the aspiring man of fashion of modest income, if he were wise, confined his equipage to the more modest proportions of a well-groomed hack, and made up for the modesty of his stable by the fineness of his wardrobe and the gallantry of his bearing.

There is a classic example of a disaster which happened to a gentleman who was less well advised. Beau Fielding, following the example of a Welsh family of the same name, thought fit to claim descent from the great family of the Hapsburgs. He appeared in the Ring, accordingly, in a chariot of surpassing splendour, with the arms of that family finely emblazoned on its panels. The Lord Denbigh of that day, who was really entitled to the same arms, was moved to indignation at the presumption of the Beau. His lordship engaged a house painter with a can of yellow paint, waited for Fielding in the Ring, set the artisan to daub the offending panel completely over, and left the Beau to retreat amidst the derision of the assembled fashion of the town.

There has never been a lack of a sense of humour in Londoners, and the absurdity of the equipage required by fashion for a drive of a few hundred yards in the Park, no doubt inspired the parody of that equipage which appeared quite suddenly in the Ring in the season of 1724. At the close of the preceding century, the ordinary hackney coach had been forbidden entrance to the Ring. The occasion of the ordinance had been the appearance of a coachful of young men and women in masks, who had horrified the exquisites of the fashionable promenade by the appalling freedom with which they greeted every passing equipage. In 1724, however, some well-born young men about town hired a large but dilapidated hackney coach, harnessed the prescribed number of six broken-down horses,

placed themselves inside, mounted scavengers on the box as footmen and chimney-sweepers as postillions, and drove through the gates ere the astonished keepers could recover themselves. They were in the Ring before they could be stopped, and duly performed the function of the promenade in their strange equipage. This was completed by half-a-dozen shoeblacks hanging on the footboard behind, wearing bags with brushes and blacking on their shoulders, and crowned with their three-legged stools by way of hats.

During the public feeling of unrest which preceded the Jacobite rising of 1715, General Cadogan marched the Life Guards and Horse Grenadiers, the Duke of Argyll's regiment of foot, and three battalions of Footguards, with field pieces and ammunition waggons, from the Tower into the Park, encamped them under canvas on the south side, just within the wall along Knightsbridge and Kensington Gore, and London was regaled with the first of those military displays which later became one of the chief attractions of Hyde Park. There were great doings on the 1st of August, the anniversary of the king's accession. The Guards were paraded in their new uniforms to the admiration of the people, and the day concluded with fireworks and illuminations. There followed reviews by the king, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Marlborough at intervals during two months, and as the weather broke up in October, the troops went into winter quarters by exchanging their canvas tents for wooden huts, and wooden stables were provided for the

horses. When the Prince of Wales' birthday came round in November there were prodigious rejoicings. The officers commanding gave great presents to the troops. We read of the Duke of Montague providing five hundred pounds of pudding, two hogsheads of wine, two of ale, and an ox to be roasted whole at the head of the first troop standard. We can imagine the joy of the open-mouthed Londoner at such proceedings, at the terrific huzzas as they drank his royal highness's health in illuminated circles at night, at the volleys of cannon and small arms which followed each toast. The Ring was deserted, and one immediate result of the presence of the soldiers was the unwonted safety of the Park for passengers, the footpads being quite disconcerted.

In 1722, again, no less than 7000 men, with a field-train, took up their position in Hyde Park. The display of 1715 had given the people a taste for the military, and the camp was the great attraction of the season. The whole town flocked to the Park, and the popularity of the meeting was so great that a full-blown fair arose on the skirts of the camp, with dancing saloons, puppet-shows, and billiard-tables and dice for the people of quality. Bartholomew Fair, in fact, was anticipated at Whitsuntide, the tea gardens of the town were denuded of their customers, and the proprietors bewailed the competition of the camp in the public prints of the day. Those prints are eloquent upon the grandeur of the review on the king's birthday, of the king and the Prince of Wales dining

in my Lord Cadogan's pavilion, "taken by Prince Eugene from the Grand Vizier at the siege of Vienna." You might see "almost sixty dukes and other peers, besides abundance of other persons of distinction," among them "the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole, the famous Prime Minister;" also the Bishop of Durham, finely mounted, and wearing a "long habit of purple with jackboots, his hat cocked and his black wig tied behind him like a military officer."

No wonder that the Ring was deserted, and the ladies, from duchesses to nurserymaids, flocked to the camp. They even adopted military habits, and red cloaks were much in vogue out of compliment to the soldiers. Grub Street grew furious at the luxury of the officers' quarters, at the tea-parties, and the invitations to drink ratafia, at the gravel walks and gardens laid out round the marquees of the higher officers. A screen of plaited branches to keep the sun from the tent of the Prince of Wales reminded the scribes of the ivy trained over the huts of the young Romans, which was followed by such disaster at Pharsalia. The floors of the tent were boarded and carpeted, and the camp beds adorned with green and red curtains. A great pen like that of Mr. Pope was employed in recording the glories of the camp of 1722. "The maidens with all their charms displayed provoke the spirit of the soldiers, tea and coffee supply the place of the Lacedæmonian black broth. The camp seems crowned with perpetual victory, for every sun that rises in the thunder of cannon sets in the music of violins."

To look forward another half century into another reign in order to complete our glance at the military attractions which have from time to time amused Londoners in Hyde Park, there were 10,000 men in tents in 1780 when the Gordon Mob was like to lay London in ruin, and King George the Third was to be seen daily on foot conversing with the officers in the most affable manner. The popular prerogative of enjoyment in the Park was on this occasion a little infringed. The "quality" were admitted freely, but a shabby coat meant exclusion for its owner. The spectacle of 1780 was altogether much less popular than others of an earlier date. The town began to grow jealous of the presence of so many soldiers, after the disturbance which drew them together had been quelled. England had had twenty years' experience of King George's personal rule by that time, and his Majesty even found it necessary to give his people his solemn assurance that he contemplated no infringements of the liberty of the nation. The camp was picturesque enough to engage the attention of Paul Sandby, and his pictures, which duly appeared in the Academy of the following season, have been perpetuated in engravings. The public were at last pacified by the removal of the troops to Finchley Common and Blackheath, where they lay for the rest of the summer.

Hyde Park, as a resort of fashion, gained greatly by the adoption of Kensington Palace as one of the royal residences. William the Third gave London

the first experience of a well-lighted road when he placed lamps along the carriage-way leading to Kensington Palace through the Park, and a new name to that road itself, which was called the King's Road. "Route du Roi," some hold, supplies the derivation of the modern "Rotten Row." The gardens of the palace at Kensington, too, were the resort of the highest "quality" from the beginning of the eighteenth century, where full dress only was allowed, with smallsword, knee-breeches, and shoe-buckles, ordinary people being admitted on Saturdays. George the Second conceived the plan of a new road a little more direct to his palace, and the road which now runs just inside the south railing of the Park to Kensington is the result of his Majesty's thoughtfulness in 1733. Queen Caroline, too, had very definite views about the parks, and Hyde Park especially. The opening of the new road seems to have relieved the old King's Road of all the wheeled traffic and to have given it a vogue as an equestrian promenade, a fashion which resulted in the decay of the inconvenient Ring. The queen, with the aid of Sir Robert Walpole and the Privy Purse, began to dream of vast schemes. These seem originally to have included a new royal palace in the Park, but the most tangible result of her Majesty's activity is the present Serpentine. There were numerous pools in the hollow which is now filled by that sheet of water connected by the little West Bourne, which rose near Paddington. The queen's men of business, Mr. Withers and Mr. Jenkinson, threw a dam across that

hollow, the dam which is now crossed by the road, and the Serpentine was the result.

We are convinced that Queen Caroline had her own interests chiefly in view when she did this ; the Serpentine was made more as a pleasing adjunct to the royal gardens at Kensington than as an embellishment of a public resort. About the time that the work was drawing to a conclusion, paragraphs began to appear in the papers which bear much evidence of courtly inspiration. We read of royal pleasure-boats for the lake, including a "little vessel for the exercise and diversion of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland," and the queen had already added to the royal gardens at Kensington three hundred acres taken from the Park. It then occurred to her Majesty that the disused Ring might be included in her demesne with advantage. "The Ring in Hyde Park being quite disused by the quality and gentry, we hear that the ground will be taken in for enlarging the Kensington Gardens," says a newspaper of 1736. Sir Robert Walpole had given great assistance to Queen Caroline in carrying out her views ; they had between them hoodwinked the king into believing that the queen was paying for the whole of the operations in the Park out of her privy purse, when public funds were being freely used for the purpose. But the most valuable advice Walpole ever gave the queen was perhaps that which set a limit to her schemes. The Ring, as we know, was not included in Kensington Gardens, and a more ambitious scheme still was happily nipped

in the bud. Caroline thought that St. James's Park would make a very noble garden if added as an appanage to the palace, and asked the old minister what it would cost. "Three Crowns, your Majesty," was the reply.

When to-day we speak of the Park we have usually Hyde Park alone in our minds, but the expression had a different meaning during the Restoration certainly, and probably for many years after that happy period. Henry the Eighth, as we saw, included St. James's in his royal chase, built his palace of St. James's, and made the swampy meadows, then often overflowed by the river, an appanage of the court. But St. James's Park remained a wild boggy tract fit for little but the flushing of herons until the Stuarts were well established, and the first tradition of social pleasure in St. James's was established only when the young princes, the Prince of Wales and Charles, and their companions, set up a tilting-ring and made a playground in the fields. Then the Park gradually became a walk for the courtiers, people of condition were afterwards admitted, and the tenants of the houses on the Westminster side obtained leave of entrance, a privilege afterwards extended to the general public. Later still the popularity and fashion of the place, aided by the fondness of King Charles the Second for its walks and shades, converted St. James's into the park *par excellence* of London.

Londoners, indeed, owe much to Charles the Second. He was the first to seize upon the capabilities of St.

James's as a playground, and had not the slightest objection in the world to sharing its pleasures with his subjects. The "waterworks" which so pleased Mr. Pepys in the making were the king's own device, and resulted in the piece of water then known as the Canal, which has since developed into the Long Water, the prettiest lake in London. Charles planted groves round the little lake known as Rosamond's Pond, which covered a spot very near that upon which the Guards now learn the goose-step, and so started the tradition of whispering lovers for which Rosamond's Pond was known for nearly a century. He filled the Canal with water-fowl, and fed them with his own royal hand at the cost of some £300 a year for corn, and so colonised that corner of London with a feathered population whose lineal descendants have delighted successive generations of cockneys, and to-day dispute with seagulls for the oblations of whole troops of nursemaids and children. Just where the lake widens out and sweeps round towards the Foreign Office, was the king's pet fancy Duck Island. Duck Island was an acre or two of wild land covered with willows, rushes, and water plants, and intersected in all directions by canals fitted with strange appliances for the rearing and trapping of ducks. The governorship of Duck Island was one of those strange court appointments which carried pensions, the invention of which amused the humorous fancy of the king. It was on a par with that famous office which solaced poor Martha Jackson for her ill treatment by some

of Cromwell's lambs, when the king made her Gentlewoman of the Horse, Countess of Pall Mall, Viscountess of Piccadilly, Baroness of the Mews, and Lady of the Crupper to the Queen.

But Charles laid the foundations of the future fashion of the Park of St. James's only when he drove that splendid road along its northern border from Spring Gardens to Buckingham Palace, planted it with trees, added subsidiary walks with avenues on each side, and founded what we now know and love as the Mall. The king was quite naturally thinking of his own pleasure when he made the Mall. The game of Pall Mall, which seems to have been of Italian origin, came into England in the reign of his grandfather King James, and was first played in London, "in a very decent and regular manner," along the road planted with a row of elms on each side which still perpetuates the name of the game. The dust of the passing coaches in Pall Mall, it seems, annoyed the players of the Restoration, and the king decided to remove the game to St. James's Park. Pall Mall seems to have been a species of croquet, on a heroic and athletic scale. The game required a long straight course, finely kept, down which a wooden ball could be driven with a mallet, and through a bridge of iron at either end. Players scored by the fewness of their strokes, as at golf, and the driving of the ball a long distance in a proper direction was one of the qualifications for success, qualifications possessed by the king and his brother James in an eminent degree.

So the king, as we say, drove that fine course through the Park, boarded it over, spread it with earth mixed with powdered cockle shells, provided its edges with scales marked with distances in figures which you may still see figured in old prints of the period, and appointed a Keeper of the Mall, or "Cockle Strewer to the King." In so doing he provided that famous promenade over which the fashion and beauty of a century displayed itself, when, after a few years, the vogue of the game expired with the advancing years and troubles of the king, its chief supporter.

It is not difficult to trace the growing fashion of the Park of St. James's in the records of those joyous days, a vogue which followed as a natural consequence of the king's fondness for the place. Charles planted acorns from the oak of Boscobel as mementoes of his former dangers, his newly-made lake was a perpetual delight, his ducks were always there to be fed, and a Dutchman records that his Majesty often stripped in the summer heats and swam in its waters. Then the king brought all sorts of strange creatures to his playground—an albino raven was a public character for years; Mr. Evelyn saw solan geese, pelicans, Balearican cranes (one with a wooden leg with a practicable joint, the work of an ingenious soldier), many sorts of deer, Guinea goats and Arabian sheep. There was a large aviary for pheasants on the ground now occupied by Marlborough House; the whole Park, indeed, was a menagerie and an unfailing attraction for Londoners at a time when Zoological Gardens

were unknown, and a taste for wild creatures could only be gratified by a visit to the mangy collections at the Tower.

Then, the Park provided a background for half those pictures of the court which light up the pages of Pepys or Evelyn or De Grammont. It was the direct way from Whitehall to Hyde Park, and Mr. Pepys describes with much detail the return of a royal party from a promenade in the Ring on the queen's birthday. A strange procession it was with the "great crowd of gallants," Catherine herself looking "mighty pretty" in her white-laced waistcoat and short crimson petticoat; the Castlemaine, neglected on this occasion, alighting by the aid of her own servant and looking "mighty out of humour" as a consequence; "and had a yellow plume in her hat, and yet is very handsome," says the susceptible Pepys; "but above all Mrs. Stewart, with her hat cocked and a red plume, with her sweet eye, little Roman nose and excellent taille, is now the greatest beauty I ever saw in all my life."

No wonder the people flocked and dodged the king in the walks of the Park until his ministers beseeched him to discourage their attentions, and everybody but Charles himself was afraid of some lurking fanatic with a dagger. But the king, as he told his brother, was certain that they would not kill him to make James king, and continued his walks in the Park, touched for the king's evil, and encouraged the troops of his subjects who followed him about, to their huge

delight. The common people thought more of the urbanity of such a monarch than of his deficiencies in political and constitutional matters, of which they understood little, and there was little cause for scandal among the bulk of his subjects when he was seen to hold "a very familiar discourse" for half-an-hour with "the impudent comedian" Mrs. Nelly Gwynn, on her terrace at the top of the Mall with his Majesty standing on the green sward beneath. Evelyn was "heartily sorry for this scene," and Mr. Pepys seeing the king come from the Castlemaine's lodgings across the Park thought it "a poor thing for a prince to do." But the majority of the Londoners who affected the place in that day were certainly unmoved, and held such doings as a distinct attraction to the Park where they were so freely admitted.

For a century and a half after King Charles inaugurated the fashion of St. James's there was scarcely a dull day. The amusements provided in the Park during the Restoration were often of a surprising character. A sporting nobleman, the Earl of Arran, undertook in 1664 to run down on foot a full-grown buck of the king's herd and kill it. He accomplished the feat without hounds of any sort, but with the help of another peer, Lord Castlehaven, who no doubt headed off the devoted buck at convenient moments. A year or two later the court organised a great wrestling match for a thousand pounds between the "western and northern men," and Cornwall and Cumberland were perhaps first brought together in

those early days. The king and "a world of lords" looked on, and Mr. Secretary Morris and Lord Gerard were the judges and awarded the stakes. Later again, when Queen Anne was on the throne, all London flocked to see Dr. Garth and the Duke of Grafton run "the short course of two hundred yards," as it would to-day to witness a similar match between Mr. Lecky, say, and the Duke of Devonshire. The Park, indeed, became the constant scene of strange matches. In default of others, sporting squires would arrange a race between servants, as when Mr. Cunningham matched a coffee-house boy against Captain Light's negro servant in a race round the Park. The whole fashion of the Mall would often be arrested in its morning walk by the spectacle of two chairmen wearing nothing but a pair of shoes, and running for dear life and a hundred pounds down the length of the Mall. Fashion would make way for these strange competitors, the gentlemen cheer the leader, and the ladies simper and hide their faces behind their fans, and this so late as 1738.

About the same time, fashion was greatly interested in hopping matches, usually against time and distance, as when a man engaged to hop a hundred yards in fifty hops, and won much money by accomplishing the feat in forty-six. Later again, all society looked on delighted at the spectacle of a fat cook running a lean footman. The respective figures of the pair can be gauged by the weight carried by the footman by way of handicap, which we learn was 110 lbs., and it is



not surprising that the poor footman fell and dropped some of his weight, and so left the race to the man of flesh. Fashion was perhaps most easily pleased when it hung breathless on the performance of a little maid of eighteen months old, whose parents and guardians, who should have known better, backed her to walk the three-quarters of a mile of the Mall in a space of thirty minutes, and realised a great stake when she toddled in with seven minutes in hand.

There was in those early days a freedom of deportment among the company which met in the Mall which no doubt had its attractions as well as its inconveniences. It was quite orthodox for a lady of birth and breeding to exchange badinage with a man she had never seen before. Skittish women without any thought of evil exchanged pleasantries with well-dressed strangers, and gave assignations which they never intended to keep. In all these pleasantries they were much aided by the fashion of wearing masks, which was revived from Tudor times at the Restoration, and continued in fashion during the reigns of Anne and George the First at least. One does not take the plays of the Restoration too seriously as a picture exact in detail of the prevailing manners, but they doubtless give a general reflection of the times and the manners with sufficient accuracy, and they are often corroborated by evidence of a more literal character. Sir Solomon, in Cibber's "Double Gallant," steps into the Park with the expectation of finding his wife in a mask flirting with a stranger. A

lady in Dilke's "Pretender," too, describes with much spirit the operations of a freakish girl of the day who enjoyed playing with fire. "I am going to my chamber to fetch my mask, hood, and scarf," she says, "and so jaunt it a little. That's to take a hackney coach, scour from playhouse to playhouse till I meet with some young fellow that has power enough to attack me, stock enough to treat me and present me, and folly enough to be laughed at for his pains."

In "St. James's Park, a Comedy as it is acted every day during the hours of twelve and two during this Season," published in 1733, the amenities of the Mall and of its indiscriminate intercourse are perfectly defined. "These times of park walking," says a character in the play, "are times of perfect carnival to the women. She that would not admit the visit of a man without his being introduced by some relation or intimate friend, makes no scruple here to commence acquaintance at first sight, readily answers to any question that shall be asked of her, values herself on being brisk at repartees, and 'to have put him to it,' as they call it, leaves a pleasure upon her face for the whole day. In short, no freedoms that can be taken here are reckoned indecent, all passes for railery and harmless gallantry."

The letters and diaries, too, are full of allusion to this custom of promiscuous acquaintance in the Park. Steele will show you a spark of his day beginning a flirtation with an unknown damsel, stepping up to her coach with his hat under his arm and his hand

on his heart, with the remark, "Madam, it is dainty weather." The correspondence of the second Earl of Chesterfield contains a letter addressed "To one who walked four whole nights with me in St. James's Park, and yet I never knew who she was." "Why," says his lordship to the lady, "if your face be suitable to the rest, which I can hardly doubt, do you refuse to have it seen, and deny the king, the duke, and all the court, who it is they so much admire?" The custom led to occasional marriages, which often made a stir. There was the famous match, for example, which Sir Francis Delaval made in 1750 with the old Lady Isabella Paulet, a widow with £90,000 in the funds and £150,000 in other property. A confederate took the place of a fortune-teller in the city whom Lady Isabella was accustomed to consult. From this prophet she heard that she would marry a handsome stranger whom she would meet in the Mall. Delaval took care to provide the meeting, and the marriage duly followed in two days. The rogue had the impudence to speak of his "harvest moon" instead of his honeymoon, and remarked *a propos* of his lady's bulky person and plain looks, "Look you, I bought Lady Delaval by weight, and paid nothing for fashion." The custom of indiscriminate acquaintance, indeed, lasted almost as long as the fashion of the promenade in the Mall itself. Mr. Samuel Richardson was humbugged for months by Lady Bradshaigh, who expressed a wish to meet him by letter, induced him to describe himself with the richest detail ("one hand

generally in his bosom, the other, a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, of a light brown complexion, teeth not yet failing him, smoothish face and ruddy cheek, a grey eye, too often overclouded by mistiness from the head, by chance lively," &c., &c.). One can imagine the old bookseller concocting the picture in front of his looking-glass. Lady Bradshaigh parodied it perfectly in one of herself, and kept the old fool walking "every warm day" for a sixmonth, until he at last realised the lady's archness, and gave up the quest with the remark, "Lud, Lud, what a giddy appearance."

It is not surprising that the fashion of St. James's should have supplied whole generations of pamphleteers with material for much copy. Here was a subject concentrated in a small space close at hand and full of inspiration for the ancestry of the scribes of the modern society paper. You may find pamphlets describing the Mall and its company in almost every year from the times of Anne to those of George the Fourth; and if these gentlemen fail, the story is taken up by one or other of the intelligent foreigners who visited our shores so regularly and left such valuable notes of their impressions. There are two writers of 1707 who favour us with their estimate of the beauty of the ladies frequenting the Mall in that year—an attractive subject no doubt. We may learn from the "British Court" that there were forty-four ladies of distinguished beauty to be met in that for-

fortunate year, "thirty-three being Court Belles and the rest from the east of Temple Bar." The Duchesses of Marlborough, of Ormond, and Bridgewater, the Countess of Sutherland, Mrs. Dench, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, open the century well. The Duchess of Marlborough, indeed, was much identified with the Park, until Walpole persuaded the queen to withdraw the royal permission to drive her coach and six along the Mall, a privilege much valued by those who enjoyed it, and the loss of which was bitterly resented by the terrible Sarah. The Mall, too, was the scene of some little embarrassment for the duke. His close-curtained carriage was mistaken for that of Prince Eugene, and was heartily cheered by the crowd. The duke put out his head, and modestly deprecated the ovation, was recognised, and greeted with cries of "Stop, thief!" This was on the queen's birthday, and his daughters, to show their contempt of the court, appeared ostentatiously in the Mall in their dressing-gowns, instead of the gorgeous "birthday clothes" which fashion demanded for the occasion.

"The beauty of the Mall in the summer is almost past description," said an enthusiastic author of a *Trip through London* in 1727. "What can be more glorious than to view the body of the nobility of our three kingdoms in so short a compass, especially when freed from mixed crowds of saucy fops and city gentry. The Ludgate Hill hobble, the Cheapside swing, the City jolt and wriggle in the gait, being easily perceived

through all the arts these smarts and perts put upon them." This gentleman saw an impudent *valet de chambre* parading in the Mall in his master's clothes, followed by "six Monmouth Street Jews bidding against each other for the raiment." We see the benches filled with loungers, tempted out of the coffee-houses by the fine weather, whose chatter "raised regiments of horse, foot, and dragoons, and the most formidable armies, without beat of drum, towns taken, sieges raised, and legions vanquished, and the nation not put to the expense of a shilling." The Park, indeed, was a great place for the loafer, then as now. It was an appanage of the court which was free from the tyranny of the king's writ, and any one guilty of a crime less heinous than high treason was safe in its precincts from bailiff or Bow Street officer. This immunity brought together a constant population of unpromising individuals, who sunned themselves on the grass, filled the benches, begged alms or told fortunes, and picked pockets. Their only enemy was the press-gang, which enjoyed privileges denied to the officers of the law, and swooped down at intervals to make hauls of as many as 150 in one day.

The hours of the promenade in the Mall were fixed, of course, by the habits of the people of condition, who gave it its vogue as a meeting-place of fashion. The morning chocolate in the bedroom and the elaborate toilette filled up the early hours of the day for the beau or the belle of Anne and the first two

Georges, and a promenade in the Mall between mid-day and two o'clock was usually their first public appearance. In the Mall appointments were arranged for the afternoon or evening, and parties made up for the play or for Ranelagh or Vauxhall. A lady or a man wishing to find a friend for a jaunt turned naturally to St. James's. Walpole left us an account of the custom when he described how he and Lady Caroline Petersham and Miss Ashe "issued into the Mall to assemble our company, which was all the town if we could get it." They gathered together "Harry Vane and the Duke of Kingston, Lord March, Mr. Whithead, a pretty Miss Beauclerc, and a very foolish Miss Sparre," and we accompany them, in another chapter, by water to Vauxhall. It was the mode to eat fruit and biscuits in the Mall, and the fruit girls, if pretty, were much patronised by the exquisites of both sexes, both as purveyors of fruit and carriers of love-letters. The peerless Mrs. Abington began life as a flower girl in the Mall, where her beauty attracted much notice, and whence she was promoted to Drury Lane, and from there to the office of *arbiter elegantiarum* of the female fashion of London, which paid her large sums for her advice in matters of dress. Another figure of the Mall was the female hawker who sold "pomatum of all sorts, lip salves, night masks and handkerchiefs for the face and neck, right chemical liquor to change the colour of the hair, trotter's oil and bear's grease to thicken it, fine mouse skin eyebrows that will stick on so as never to come off." The

whole tradition of the Mall, indeed, is that of flounce and furbelow. The evening promenade was made in full dress, after the early dinner of five or six o'clock, and was ordinarily even more rich in feminine splendour than the earlier function at midday. An enthusiastic German traveller, after describing the greatness of the crowd of the evening, and the pretty effect of the innumerable lamps, records that on the following morning "when the sun shines the ground sparkled with pins which have been dropped from the ladies' dresses."

The rural character of St. James's Park, which it long retained, is very well illustrated by an incident which is recorded of the days of George the Second. Bluff old Sir Robert Walpole sent all the way to Houghton for his pack of otter hounds to hunt an otter which had come across from the river at Westminster, and had grown fat and lazy upon the king's carp in the Long Water. Pasturage in St. James's and in Hyde Parks for milch cows long provided opportunities for the pleasant custom of eating syllabubs in the open air, which prevailed for a century. "A can of milk, a can of red cow's milk," was one of the cries of London in the parks for many years. Sometimes the privilege of grazing cattle in the parks was bestowed by royalty as a sort of pension. An interesting case in point was that of the two old ladies named Searle, who had the distinction of being the aunts of the peerless Beau Brummell, and dispensed milk and syllabubs at a gatekeeper's lodge in the Green Park which stood opposite Clarges Street.

The town continued to grow, however, and its growth led to changes which destroyed much of the old rural character of St. James's. Considerations of drains and sanitation led to the removal of Duck Island, and to the filling in, in the year 1770, of Rosamond's Pond. Rosamond's Pond had acquired an evil name as a place where maidens who had begun their love story in the groves which surrounded it, sought refuge from the troubles which followed later in its waters, and its disappearance seems to have caused little regret. But the aquatic interest of St. James's was not diminished by the addition of the open water which replaced the marshes and willows of Duck Island. The wild fowl continued to prosper and increase in number, and their ranks came to include strange personalities like that of Old Jack, the royal swan, who was a public character for half a century. That delightful fowl was bred and reared in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, and was placed upon the Long Water by Queen Charlotte, whose favourite he was. He drowned dogs who molested him by holding their heads under water, pulled small boys who annoyed him into the lake by their small clothes, and persistently resisted the introduction of strange birds as long as his strength remained, but perished under the continued attacks of a flock of Polish geese in the year 1840.

The Mall of St. James's continued to hold its vogue as a meeting-place of fashion until near the end of the century. The reporters of the newspapers of a hundred

years, in recording the appearance of any celebrity, usually placed him in the Mall. That was a historical airing in 1753 when Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, taking off his star and ribbon only, and seeking no other disguise, took a turn through the Mall of what he considered his own park, to the full knowledge of George the Second, as Mr. Hume, who had it direct from the Earl Mareschal, records. Lord Holderness, with much fencing, asked his Majesty's pleasure in the matter. "My lord, I shall do just nothing at all," replied the stout old king; "when he is tired of England he will go abroad again." Famous Frenchmen, like the Comte de Grasse, Rodney's prisoner from Dominica, escorted by Sir Hyde Parker, would walk in the Mall as a matter of course, much cheered by the people, who recognised their brave enemy. The female loveliness of a beauteous generation of women of condition was to be seen in the Mall between 1770 and the end of the century, the ladies whose personalities inspired the finest labours of Reynolds and Romney and Gainsborough, and whose effigies in mezzotinto are the subjects of the contests of the West End salerooms to-day; Lady Townshend and her sisters the Montgomeries, Lady Derby, Lady Barrymore and Lady Hinchinbrooke, Lady Stanley, Miss Pitt, the Duchess of Gordon, the Duchess of Rutland, Lady Sefton, Lady Harriet Foley, Lady Jersey, Lady Anne Stanhope, Lady Melbourne, Mrs. Crewe, Mrs. Bouverie, and the incomparable Duchess of Devonshire.

An ingenious journalist of the *Morning Post*, with tastes of a mathematical and statistical order, drew up a scale of attractions in which twelve of these ladies were allotted marks for "beauty, figure, elegance, wit, sense, grace, expression, sensibility, and principle." We presume that this gentleman was intimate with them all, for he gives us some very private information on the subject of his inquiries. It is shocking to learn that the Duchess of Gordon, who kept Mr. Pitt's country gentlemen together session after session, had no elegance; that Mrs. Crewe, who fascinated the Whigs, from the prince downwards, had no grace; Lady Melbourne no figure, Lady Jersey no sense and no principle. Nineteen was the highest score under each of the headings of the contest, and the Countess of Barrymore was an easy winner with eighteen and one-third, Lady Anne Stanhope a bad second with twelve, and Lady Jersey at the bottom of the list with five.

The vogue of the Mall expired somewhat suddenly. About 1786 fashion left its shades and avenues to the middle-classes, the city ladies, and the country cousins, and moved off unaccountably to the Green Park. The Green Park, since Charles the Second enclosed it about 1660, had been little more than a hunting-ground for footpads and a duelling-ground for drunken or quarrelsome combatants. The king had made a harbour for deer at the western end, and some ice-houses of his Majesty built near its centre might be seen until the beginning of the present century. But though Queen Caroline made the walk which runs along the

backs of the houses in Arlington Street in 1730, and was often seen there with her children in the spring, it attracted little fashion or attention as a meeting-place for people of condition until about 1780. Then it suddenly became the habit of the well-bred to make their evening promenade up the Queen's walk and round the reservoir which filled the north-eastern corner of the Green Park, the hollow of which may still be seen filled with white mist on a damp evening. Here for a few seasons fashionable London displayed itself in its evening dress after dinner, and incidentally and accidentally gave a great value to the houses on the west side of Arlington Street. Great sums were then paid to the Crown for the privilege of building those balconies, bow-windows and terraces which diversify the Park front of Arlington Street to-day. We read of Mr. Rigby paying £4000 for a bow-window, and Warren Hastings and others in a like proportion for a like concession. The view across the Green Park at that time was very impressive. There was no building in Pimlico or Belgravia; the Thames could be seen from these windows; Lambeth was a marsh with pastures, ponds, willows and cattle, recalling a Dutch landscape, and behind all rose the hills of Sydenham, covered with wood unspoiled by building and unclouded by smoke.

Out-door fashion thus moved up from St. James's through the Green Park to find its final resting-place in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, but it became sadly shorn of its earlier glories as the last century

drew to its close. The continually-growing lateness of the dinner-hour robbed fashion-on-foot of much of its fine plumage and of the attractions of feminine beauty in evening dress. The promenade in the parks gradually declined and was last represented, perhaps, by that extraordinary mode of the last years of the eighteenth century, when ladies of all ages displayed their charms in scanty dresses of light material in the classic taste, dresses with waists under the armpits, and of a delicacy of texture which suggested more than concealed the figures of their wearers, and provided rich material for the caricaturists of the times. This poor survival of the earlier glories of the promenade was at last absorbed by the taste for the riding and driving of horses and chariots of the last quarter of the century, and expired amidst the lamentations of the old school who remembered the palmy days of the Mall.

That curious revival of a love of equipage, and its display in Hyde Park after the lapse of nearly a century, was preceded by a change of fashion in dress among the men, a change which allowed the gentleman to dress himself in the habit of his coachman and drive his own chariot in the Park. The Whigs who surrounded Charles Fox at Brooks's during the American War gave the fashion a great impetus. Any time after 1780 it was quite usual to meet men of an assured position, like Fox himself, Lord Derby, or the Duke of Norfolk, dressed with a studied negligence in a costume suitable for following hounds or riding post. Then came men like Sir John Lade, "in an

elegant suit of buff," who took to driving as a diversion or sport. The new amusement was patronised in feebler fashion by the Prince of Wales, who would drive through the Park with St. Leger or Lake in a carriage and pair, "with blue harness edged with red, the horses' manes decorated with scarlet ribbons and the Prince's plumes on their crests, the carriage lined with rose-coloured velvet, with cushions of rose-coloured satin and festoons of rich gold braid." The second Lord Rodney was another of these early Jehus, and the first to drive nag-tailed horses in his carriage. Mr. Charles Finch, the brother of the Earl of Aylesford, was another, perhaps the first, to turn out with a four-in-hand, "disguised in a livery coat, it being an unusual thing for a gentleman." Mr. Thomas Onslow, afterwards Lord Cranley, the "Little T.O." of the caricaturists, was another. Driving in the parks became the fashion, and there, as the present century opened, might be seen those strange vehicles from which all modern carriages have been evolved. The phaeton of that day was a spider-like arrangement with four sprawling wheels, four horses, and holding but two persons. There was the curricule, an invention of more sanity, but still requiring three horses and carrying only two persons. The gig was the father of the tilburies, whisks, and all other two-wheeled vehicles, many of which still survive. The horses, as we learn, were of a heavy breed, "Cleveland blacks and long-tailed bays," approaching in type those used for light drays and omnibuses to-day.

With materials such as these the youth of both sexes of the Regency and George the Fourth superseded the old promenades of the Mall, and revived the tradition of equestrianism and equipage of Hyde Park which survives in our own day, and has produced such organisations as the Four-in-Hand Club. The young men, we read, in their noble ardour to emulate the professional, had their teeth filed so that they might be able to expectorate in the manner approved by the stage-coachmen; the women startled the ordinary inhabitant of the streets by the recklessness of their driving. There was Lady Archer, for example, who was the terror of the West End from the pace at which she drove; Lady Stewart with her famous four greys, and a "Mrs. Garden from Portland Street" who, as early as 1783, won a considerable bet by driving her phaeton and bays from Grosvenor Gate through the Park to Kensington in five and a half minutes.

We believe we have given in outline the features of the life in the parks of London which have made of them places of recreation and enjoyment from Tudor times until our own; the details may be filled in from a wealth of accurate material collected in such admirable works as that of Mr. Jacob Larwood, the "Story of the London Parks." If space and the scheme of our undertaking had permitted we might have peopled the walks and drives of them all with many notable figures of modern social England, and traced some diversions which have become part of the lives of numbers of Englishmen in their origin or early deve-

lopments in the same pleasant surroundings. Skating, for example, was perhaps first seen in England by Mr. Pepys and his contemporaries on the ice of the canal in St. James's; and a century later fashionable London flocked to admire the agility of Lord Carlisle and Mr. Benjamin West, the painter, on the Serpentine, when my Lord March came up in a carriage wrapped in three bearskins, with his hands in a muff, and his carriage warmed with a portable stove, and watched a company of his friends walking through a minuet on the ice. There was much primitive cricket too in Hyde Park in the reign of George the Second, when the citizen could watch Frederick Prince of Wales and a dozen of men of birth and great station at the humble exercises of the game in its earlier and undeveloped periods. Improvised prize-rings were another attraction of the second half of the eighteenth century, when Ben Green of Carnaby Market would fight "Chitty" Myers of the Adelphi on a Sunday morning, and provide so popular an entertainment that thirty sportsmen who were watching the fun on one limb of an elm came to the ground by the breaking of the branch, and half of them were conveyed to Chelsea Hospital. Finally, although no one ever perhaps fought a duel for pleasure, the chance of seeing an encounter was a distinct addition to the joys of Hyde Park for certain minds, and from the days of Hamilton and Mohun to those of Fox and Adair, the mere rumour of such an encounter would bring such crowds as would often prevent the meeting taking place at all.

We all know the part which the parks fill in the lives of Londoners to-day, or if we sometimes forget it, it may be easily realised by imagining for a moment Hyde Park and St. James's, the Green Park and Regent's Park, to say nothing of Battersea Park, Victoria Park, and Finsbury Park, and others farther afield, cut up and devoted to streets of smug villas or workmen's dwellings. The pleasures which we have recalled have been exchanged for others which are shared by thousands of humbler people, and the parks themselves have surely changed for the better in every respect but that of a quaint rusticity since Sir Robert Walpole hunted the otter in St. James's. There are even compensations for the Londoner in that same connection of the *rus in urbe*; the intelligent manipulation of shrub and flower border, with their masses of lovely colour, which greets one in most of our great parks is surely a model for all operations of the sort; and there are certainly worse places in which to study the amusing idiosyncrasies of many wild creatures, ringdoves say, or water-hens or seagulls, than the little garden at the foot of the Serpentine, or the Long Water in St. James's Park.

CHAPTER XI

THE CLUBS AND COFFEE-HOUSES

THE great modern institution of organised leisure which has its headquarters at the almost innumerable club-houses of London, and is so important a part of the social life of to-day, has reached its present vast proportions only in quite recent times. If you look back over the last fifty years you will find club-life and its habitations in London shrinking indeed in bulk and in numbers, but still of considerable dimension. Go back another fifty years to the opening days of the nineteenth century, and you will find record of a bare dozen clubs only in London. Then take as your stand-point the year 1750, and you will find one club certainly, and perhaps two. Finally, recede to the last years of William the Third, and you will discover that the club, as we know it, was as yet in its embryo stage, that is to say, it was a mere assembly of congenial spirits meeting at the coffee or chocolate houses, institutions just then coming into great vogue. It is for this last reason that we include coffee-houses in our inquiry, and seek in the records of their life the origin of the modern club. For the purposes of that inquiry we define the London club

as a body of men meeting continuously in a house or rooms of its own. With such limitation and definition of our subject, it is quite possible to trace the whole vast system of club-life in England to its origin in a meeting of gentlemen of condition in the last years of the seventeenth century at White's Chocolate-house in St. James's Street, a house occupying a site not far from the present building at the top of the street where White's Club still opens its doors and lights its candles.

It follows therefore that we may, without undue confusion of cause and effect, ascribe the origin of club-life in England, an organisation which has transformed the habits of many Londoners and acquired for the solace of its devotees the choicest sites of the town, to the introduction into this country of "the bitter black drink called coffee," as Mr. Pepys described that stimulant. Club-life would doubtless have found other channels of development in the absence of the facilities which the coffee-houses provided. But as things are, there is no doubt that the gatherings of men of all conditions of life to drink coffee at these places supplied the opportunity for which social London was waiting. We point, therefore, at this moment with the greatest confidence to a humble establishment which was opened for the sale of coffee in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill, in the year 1652, as the parent of institutions of such superfine male fashion as White's, the Turf, or the Marlborough Clubs of our own day.

Antiquarians have decided after much painful inquiry that the first coffee-house opened in England was at Oxford, "at the Angel, in the parish of St. Peter in the East," where one Jacobs, a Jew, made a venture in the sale of the new drink in the year 1650; "and there it was by some who delighted in novelty drank." It was not, however, until two years later that the habit of drinking coffee in public reached London, at the house in Cornhill which we have already mentioned. The origin of the London establishment was, as it would seem, quite independent of the establishment in Oxford. Mr. Edwards, a Turkey merchant, who was accustomed to travel in the East, acquired the Oriental habit on his travels, and brought home with him to London from Ragusa one Pasqua Rosee, a youth who acted as his servant and was accustomed to prepare Mr. Edwards' coffee for him of a morning. "But the novelty thereof," says Mr. Oldys the antiquarian, "drawing too much company to him he allowed the said servant with another of his son-in-law to set up the first coffee-house in London at St. Michael's Alley in Cornhill. The sign was Pasqua Rosee's own head." And to that auspicious event we owe, as we say, the origin and the subsequent development of the social club in England.

The general acceptance of this new habit of coffee drinking seems at first to have hung fire. In any case, it was not until four years later that there is record of any other establishment of the same kind in

London. In 1656 one Mr. Farr, who then kept at No. 15 Fleet Street the house we still know as the Rainbow, offered the new drink for sale. There was some opposition to the new custom, it is clear, for there is record of Mr. Farr being "presented by the inquest of St. Dunstan's in the West for making and selling a drink called coffee, whereby in making the same he annoyeth his neighbours by evil smells." But the opposition here and elsewhere was unavailing, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century the coffee-houses in the town were so increased in numbers that they were reckoned at 3000 by Mr. Hatton in his "New View of London," and the coffee-house had already taken its place as one of the most remarkable among the social developments of modern England.

For by the time that Queen Anne came to the throne all London had arranged itself into groups of patrons for one or other of the different coffee-houses, and representative bodies of all ranks and conditions of Londoners had each a rendezvous in the house which best suited its taste. City merchants went to Garraway's in Change Alley, Cornhill, a house which combined business with pleasure, and had an auction-room on the first floor. Garraway's was a house of call for the great people coming to the city on business from Lincoln's Inn or Covent Garden, for the buyers and sellers of stock, and for "the foreign Banquiers," as Mr. Defoe has recorded. Much of the gambling in connection with the South Sea Bubble of 1720 was

conducted at Garraway's. Jonathan's, also in Change Alley, was another famous house of business devoted to stock-jobbers. Lloyd's, the great organisation of the shipping interest which still flourishes in its rooms at the Royal Exchange, is the development of a coffee-house of the same name; and the Jerusalem Coffee-house on Cornhill was an institution of the same type which has not survived. The doctors had their meeting-house at Batson's at the Royal Exchange, where physicians used to meet the apothecaries and prescribe for patients they were never to see. The clergy, from bishops downwards, went to Child's in St. Paul's Churchyard or the Chapter Coffee-house in Paternoster Row. Leaving the city and proceeding westward, Nando's, the house at Temple Bar which has just been rescued from destruction by the County Council; Dick's, a few doors further west; Serle's in Portugal Street; the Grecian in Devereux Court, Strand; and Squire's in Fulwoods Rents, Holborn, were all houses near the various Inns of Court and much haunted by lawyers.

Going west again, the neighbourhood of Covent Garden supplied, at different periods, a group of coffee-houses which were as a Mecca or holy place for all whose tastes or interests lay in the direction of letters. At Wills's, at the corner of Bow and Russell Streets, the great Dryden held his court, with a chair of his own near the fire in the winter and another on the balcony in summer. Here the great man laid down the law upon all questions of taste in literature and

the drama, very good-naturedly, as we believe, but still with authority—

“As who should say, I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark.”

Dean Lockier as a boy of seventeen walked into Wills's to hear the wits of that famous house, and happened upon the great man discoursing of his own work, as was his habit. “If anything of mine is good,” says Mr. Dryden complacently, “’tis *Macflecno*, and I value myself the more upon it, because it is the first piece of ridicule written in heroics.” “*Macflecno* is a very fine poem,” says the boy rather nervously, “but I do not imagine it to be the first that was ever writ that way.” “How long have you been a dealer in poetry,” replies Mr. Dryden after a gasp of astonishment, “and what is that you imagine to have been writ so before.” “Boileau’s ‘*Lutrin*’ and Tassoni’s ‘*Secchia Rapita*,’” answers the boy, naming two works from which, as he says, he knew the poet “had borrowed some strokes.” “’Tis true,” said Dryden, “I had forgot them.” Such was a typical incident at Wills’s, an incident which is as pretty an illustration of life at that famous house under Dryden’s kindly rule as need be; the trembling approach of the disciple ambitious for a word from the great man, or a pinch from his box, and the not unkindly reception of the modest admirer by the presiding genius of the place.

Dean Swift used to think poorly of Wills’s; “the worst conversation I ever heard in my life was at

Wills's," he said, but the doctor, as we know, was often difficult to please. He, with Mr. Addison, Mr. Steele, and some other noted men of letters, helped to make the fame of Button's on the other side of Russell Street, where the literary tradition of the coffee-houses took shelter after the death of Dryden and the decline of Wills's. It was at Button's that Mr. Steele set up his famous Lion's Head Letter-Box, where the scribes of that period are supposed to have dropped in those pleasant communications to the *Guardian*, the famous relic still happily preserved at the Duke of Bedford's mansion at Woburn.

The Bedford was the other literary coffee-house of Covent Garden, the Bedford "in the north-west corner of the Piazza," the house of Foote, Fielding, Churchill, Hogarth, Dr. Arne, Goldsmith; the Bedford "crowded with men of parts, almost every one you meet is a polite scholar and a wit," as the *Connoisseur* of 1754 enthusiastically records. Prodigious sallies of wit "echoed from box to box at the Bedford," as we are told, and there was a special place where a man with an indecent joke to fire off might discharge it out of earshot of the lady at the bar.

Such houses as these were all of a professional character, and supported each by its own body of professional men. The life which developed within their doors, therefore, hardly falls within the limits of a work dealing with the pleasures of past generations of Londoners. We must look elsewhere for the particular establishments which became the birthplaces

and nurseries of the social club. Proceeding still westward we soon come upon a group of coffee-houses which were entirely supported by lounging men of fashion, the "pretty fellows" of Anne and the Georges, and by the adventurers and sycophants who had fortunes to push in such fine company. The most fashionable of these houses were clustered in or near the parish of St. James's, taking their tone, as was natural, from the neighbourhood of the court. Many of these had a political cast, but all were meeting-places of men of birth and condition.

The St. James's coffee-house was the last house but one at the bottom of St. James's Street, on the western side, and its frequenters were devoted to the Whig interest from the days of Addison to those of Edmund Burke. It was at the St. James's, was it not, that Mr. Steele dated all his letters to the *Tatler* on foreign and domestic news; and where Mr. Garrick, half a century later, produced his mock epitaph upon Dr. Goldsmith, which provoked the much more effective "Retaliation." The officers of the Guards on duty at the Palace were often of the company at the St. James's. At the Cocoa Tree, on the south side of Pall Mall, gathered the high Tories and those discontented gentlemen who looked askance at the Hanoverian king at St. James's, and drank furtive healths to the Pretender at St. Germain's by passing the claret glass over the water bottle as they pledged "the king over the water." "The little gentleman in velvet" was another favourite toast at the Cocoa Tree, in pleasant allusion to the

mole whose earthworks were supposed to have caused the accident which resulted in the death of William the Third. The Cocoa Tree kept its doors open in Pall Mall till about the year 1727; later it removed to what is now 64 St. James's Street, where meets the club of the same name into which the coffee-house developed. Ozinda's was another coffee-house of the high Tory complexion at the lower end of St. James's Street. The Smyrna in Pall Mall was a noted house where a man might hear the latest political rumour at court or the freshest news by ship-letter. White's Chocolate-house in St. James's Street, on the site of the present Boodle's Club, was a meeting-place for the most fashionable exquisites of the town and the court, and for the followers who lived upon them. In the early meetings of that fine company at White's Chocolate-house at the end of the seventeenth century, we find, as we repeat, the origin of the social club in London.

It was in these places of public resort, of which we have mentioned typical houses only, that modern social London may be said to have been evolved. Merchants used the coffee-house as office and exchange, lawyers and other professional men as a place to seek clients, the clergy to get patronage and preferment, the fashionable lounge to gossip and kill time. They were all nominally open to anybody who could pay the modest fee of a penny or twopence, which was always left on the counter upon quitting the room, and there was a fine show

of democracy in the rules which were hung up in most of them; but it was a pretence only. Strangers of a class different from the ordinary company were more or less frowned upon by the regular frequenters. At Wills's, for example, it was not usual for a man to make regular use of the place without an introduction from one of its patrons. Smoking was practised at most of the coffee-houses in Covent Garden and east of Temple Bar; but a man calling for a pipe at those about St. James's would have been shown the door. On the other hand, any adventurer who could possess himself of a suit of clothes cut in the prevailing fashion, could appear at the best of them; and it was jocularly remarked that the judge at White's Chocolate-house often rubbed shoulders with the highwayman he afterwards condemned to be hanged at Tyburn.

There are a score of contemporary writers whom we may accompany to the coffee-houses of their day, while the life at them was a new thing, and considered worthy of being depicted. The facetious Mr. Ned Ward, of the "London Spy," will describe for us the men of fashion at Old Man's in Scotland Yard: "A gaudy crowd of Tom Essences were walking backwards and forwards with their hats in their hands, not daring to put them to their intended use, lest it should put the foretops of their wigs into some disorder. The clashing of their snush box lids in opening and shutting made more noise than their tongues. Bows and congees of the newest

mode were here exchanged 'twixt friend and friend with wonderful exactness. They made a humming like so many hornets in a country chimney, not with their talking, but with their whispering over their new minuets and bories, with their hands in their pockets, if only free from their snush box." Ned was used to rougher company, but his naïve satire does not fail to present a recognisable picture of the decorum of the fashionable coffee-house of the West End.

A writer of a different type, Mr. Mackay, the author of the "Journey through England," published in 1714, will give us some few particulars of life at the same houses of St. James's. "About twelve o'clock," says he, "the *beau monde* assemble in several coffee and chocolate houses, the best of which are White's Chocolate-house, the Cocoa Tree, the Smyrna, and the British coffee-houses, and all these so near one another, that in less than an hour you see the company of them all. You are entertained at piquet or basset at White's, or you may talk politics at the Smyrna or St. James's." Tea, coffee, and chocolate, and wine were purveyed at these houses, with light viands like biscuit and sandwiches; set meals were supplied only at the taverns—houses of a different type in which, as to-day, the sale of liquor was the chief object. "But the general way here," says Mr. Mackay, "is to make a party at the coffee-house to go to dine at the tavern, except you are invited to dine at the table of some great man."

But the best account of life at the coffee-house is

preserved in the *Spectators*, the *Tatlers*, and *Guardians*—papers which were put forth at the moment when the coffee-house was at the height of its vogue, and were written not seldom at the table of one of them, and in the midst of the very company they described. We turn, therefore, to those old papers, and follow their authors into the different coffee-houses of the town, and in their company we shall have little difficulty in watching the companies of most of them assembling, and in seeing the modern social club taking shape.

The coffee-house of Addison's day was open at six in the morning, and from his own pleasant banter we may gather a fairly clear idea of the life within its doors during the next eighteen hours. In that lively *Spectator*, No. 49, are presented to us the humours of one of the houses near the Inns of Court—Nando's, perhaps, or the Grecian. Tom Beaver, the haberdasher, is one of the first arrivals, the coffee-house oracle, "who has a levee of more undissembled friends and admirers than most of the ministers or generals of Great Britain. Every man about him has perhaps a newspaper in his hand, but none can pretend to guess what step will be taken in any one Court of Europe till Mr. Beaver has thrown down his pipe and declared what measures the allies must enter into upon the new posture of affairs."

To Mr. Beaver succeeded the students of the Temple, "some ready dressed for Westminster Hall, others in night-gowns—one would think these vir-

tuosos take a gay cap, slippers, a scarf, and party-coloured gown," says Addison, "to be ensigns of dignity. The gentleman in the strawberry sash, who presides so much over the rest, has, it seems, subscribed to every opera this last winter, and is supposed to receive favours from one of the actresses." It was not until such triflers as these had cleared away that the real company of the houses used to assemble—men like Addison and Steele themselves, "men who have business and good sense in their faces, and come to the coffee-house either to transact affairs or enjoy conversation . . . those who relish calm and ordinary life." Mr. Addison's happy phrase is not a bad description of an ideal club to-day.

It is not difficult, as we say, to people the coffee-houses from those pleasant pages. There is the knot of young fellows hanging about the pretty waitress at the bar, much to the scandal of the older customers, who have more difficulty than these generous youths in getting their orders executed. We see the etiquette of claiming acquaintance with a chance stranger at the coffee-house over a pipe of tobacco. "I observed," says the *Spectator*, "three persons in close conference over a pipe of tobacco, upon which, having filled one for my own use, I lighted it at the little wax candle that stood before them, and after having thrown in two or three whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the company. I need not tell my reader that lighting a man's pipe at the same candle is looked

upon among brother smokers as an overture to conversation and friendship."

If we may take seriously Mr. Richard Steele's speculation in No. 521 of the same periodical, it was a recognised diversion of the town "to tell a lie at Charing Cross in the morning at eight of the clock and then follow it through all parts of the town until eight at night." Mr. Addison displays the whole process for us to perfection in *Spectator* No. 403. The particular fable he supposes to be under discussion in 1712 is the death of the King of France. "At the St. James's," he says, "I heard the whole Spanish monarchy disposed of, and all the line of Bourbon provided for in less than a quarter of an hour." At Giles's, "a board of French gentlemen who had espoused the Whig interest, very positively affirmed that the king had departed this life about a week since, and therefore proceeded without any further delay to the release of their friends in the galleys." At Jenny Man's was "an alert young fellow that cocked his hat upon a friend of his who entered just at the same time with myself, and accosted him after the following manner: 'Well, Jack, so the old prig is dead at last. Sharp's the word, now or never, boy, up to the walls of Paris.'" At Wills's "the discourse was gone off from the death of the king to that of Monsieur Boileau, Racine, Corneille, and several other poets, who would have obliged the world with very noble elegies upon the death of so great a prince." At a coffee-house in Fish Street the

chief politician, after taking a pipe of tobacco, opined "that if the King of France is certainly dead we shall have plenty of mackerel this season, and proceeded to show how the death of that great man would affect our pilchards." At another, "a non-juror and a lace man were warmly in dispute as to whether the late king was like Augustus Cæsar or Nero." At another still, "the haberdasher, who was the oracle of the coffee-house, called several witnesses that he had declared his opinion, above a week before, that the French king was certainly dead, and that considering the late advices we had received from France, it was impossible that it could be otherwise. As he was laying these together, and dictating to his hearers with great authority, there came in a gentleman from Garraway's with advice that the king was in good health and was gone out a hunting the very morning the post came away, upon which the haberdasher stole off the hat that hung upon a wooden peg by him, and retired to his shop with great confusion."

The pleasant leisurely life of those days in the coffee-house, the life out of which the club grew, is very delicately suggested, we think, in those old *Spectators* and *Guardians*, and the types of men who frequented them very happily presented for us. In a dozen of those papers we meet figures of admirable humour. There is the loud-voiced young gentleman with a long purse, who was ever ready to support his opinion with a wager, to the discomfiture of his less affluent opponents, who had "five guineas upon

questions in geography, two that the Isle of Wight is a peninsula, and three guineas to one that the earth is round," and who laid twenty pieces with the gentleman "who dealt mightily in antique scandal" as to the precise relations between Cæsar and Cato's sister. Then there is the musical youth given to whistling airs from the opera "in the open coffee-house," and who showed his sympathy generally with the lyric arts, who "danced up to the glass in the middle of the room, and practised the minuet steps to his own humming, and with one hand extended as leading a lady in it, danced both French and country dances, and admonished his supposed partner by smiles and nods to hold up her head and fall back, and who began his exercises only after clearing his throat for a full half-hour."

The social intercourse of the coffee-houses, which is displayed so admirably by these old essayists, was, as we believe, the expression of a feeling of security among all classes of Englishmen after the troubled days of the seventeenth century. It was the expression of a sense of rest and leisure, of possibilities of work and enjoyment, which were felt by plain men only after the convulsions raised in the country by the evils of the Stuart rule had ceased. Men now for the first time for a hundred years saw opportunities both for business and relaxation which had been impossible during the period of civil and religious tumult, of rebellion and revolution, which was only terminated by the Act of Settlement and by the acceptance of the

Hanoverian dynasty. A period of social prosperity and expansion was then beginning which developed later under the wise rule of the sagacious Walpole, and made possible amenities of social life which had been unknown in England since the days of Elizabeth.

Apart and distinct from the intercourse of the coffee-houses, in which, as we shall show, the social club took its origin, were those little gatherings which men of parts and substance began to form, gatherings which assumed the names of clubs, and repeated in the times of Anne and George the First the famous symposia of the Mermaid in those of Elizabeth and James. We do not regard these little meetings at taverns as clubs in the true sense of the word, as we understand it to-day. But a work dealing with the amusements of the last century must on no account omit mention of those famous societies in which were to be found the great men of many generations during their hours of leisure and relaxation, such renowned gatherings as the Kit Kat Club, the Dilettante Society, and the Literary Club of Johnson and Burke.

The Kit Kat Club we take to be the very expression itself of the security and beneficence of the new order of things under the wise Whig rule; the Kit Kat with its nine members all of the Whig interest, that goodly company of great nobles and men of wit and learning, with its toasting-glasses inscribed with the names of the famous beauties of the day, its generous patronage of arts and letters, its stately pilgrimages in its stars and ribbons to the house of Christopher Kat, the mutton-

pieman in Shire Lane by Temple Bar. There is no better memorial to-day of that brilliant social life of the early years of the last century just then beginning than that stately set of engravings in mezzotinto after the famous portraits by Sir Godfrey which are still to be seen at Bayfordbury.

The uneasy spirits of the other side in politics had also their social meetings, like those under the influence of Dean Swift, the Saturday, the "Brothers," and the "Scriblerus" Clubs, of which there is such frequent mention in the *Journal to Stella*. The "Saturday" was a small society, composed originally of four members only—Swift, Lord Rivers, the Lord Keeper, and Lord Bolingbroke. Afterwards "other rabble," as the Dean described it, intruded, the Duke of Ormond, Lord Anglesey, Lord Dartmouth and the rest. The "Brothers" was the outcome of another social scheme of the Dean, meeting on Thursdays at taverns and coffee-houses; "the end of our club," as the Dean recorded, "is to advance conversation and friendship, and to reward learning without interest or recommendation. We take none in but men of wit and men of interest, and if we go on as we began no other club in this town will be worth talking of." The society grew to nineteen members, "nine lords and ten commoners," and there is interesting evidence as to the way in which Swift used his masterful personality to prevent undesirable additions. "The Duke of Beaufort had the confidence to propose his brother-in-law the Earl of Danby to be a member, but I opposed

it so warmly that it was waived. Danby is not twenty, and we will have no more boys."

The members of this select society met at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street, at Ozinda's Coffee-house, or at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, and often grumbled terribly at the cost of their dinners. It would seem that each member entertained his fellows in turn, being president for the day only. A symposium at the Thatched House, as we learn, cost the Dean seven guineas; the Duke of Ormond's "treat" cost £20 for a dinner of four dishes without dessert and not counting wine. They occasionally had a dinner cooked in Queen Anne's own kitchen at St. James's and sent over to Ozinda's close by, and at times they took an airing in the country, as when fifteen of them dined together "under a canopy in an arbour at Parson's Green," and the Dean never saw anything "so fine and romantick."

Good fellowship and conversation were the objects of the "Brothers," but there was usually a spice of politics to season their meetings, and benevolent actions were not forgotten. Thus the Dean would often wheedle twenty guineas from one of his great friends for some poor author of the right Tory complexion, and the printer's devil was accustomed to attend the meetings with a proof of the Dean's last new squib against the Whigs.

The convivial feelings of which we take note in those days was nowhere stronger than among the men of taste and knowledge who formed the great learned

societies. There was a notable club, which was recruited exclusively from among the members of the Royal Society, which met on Thursdays at various taverns, and called itself the Club of Royal Philosophers, and later, the Royal Society Club. This club seems to have been founded somewhere about 1731, and its early surroundings are very typical of a dining society of the eighteenth century. Sir Joseph Ayloffe, one of its first members, has recorded how Dr. Halley, the famous astronomer, used to come to London from the observatory at Greenwich to Child's Coffee-house, to meet his friends for conversation. That conversation often detained them until after their dinner hour, and on such occasions they arranged to go to "a house in Dean's Court, between an ale-house and a tavern, where was a great draft of porter, but not drank in the house." Mr. Reynell was the landlord, and one of the company was accustomed to go round to Knight's in Newgate Street and buy fish, "having first informed himself how many meant to stay and dine." Five or six were the usual numbers, and the dinner, which was limited to fish and pudding, was cooked by Reynell and cost half a crown.

So originated the Royal Society Club, which followed Mr. Reynell to the King's Arms and the Mitre, developed into a society of forty learned members dining at Pontack's, the famous city restaurant, at the Crown and Anchor, the Freemason's Tavern in Great Queen Street, and in our own day at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street. Those

primitive early dinners are very eloquent as to the difference of the wants in such matters between those days and our own; there were some other curious points of interest about this club of philosophers. They were accustomed to make honorary members of such "noblemen and gentlemen as sent them venison and game," and they announced their perfect readiness to pay the carriage and fee the keeper. "Resolved, *nem. con.*," says a rule of 3rd May 1750, "that any nobleman or gentleman complimenting this company with venison, not less than a haunch, shall during the continuance of such annuity be deemed an honorary member, and admitted as often as he comes without paying the fee which those members do who are elected by ballot." The present of a turtle carried the same privileges. Says an entry of 5th August 1751, "The society being this day entertained with halfe a bucke by the most noble the Marquess of Rockingham, it was agreed *nem. con.* to drink his health in claret."

The other learned club of those days which still holds its meetings is the Dilettante Society, formed in 1734 with the double object of social intercourse and the encouragement of the arts. According to Mr. Horace Walpole, in gaining whose approbation the society was unfortunate enough to fail, "the nominal qualification is having been to Italy, and the real one being drunk." Walpole was for some reason or other severely censorious of the Dilettantes. Listen to him nearly half a century later when the society produced

its "Ionian Antiquities." "Those who are industrious and correct and wish to forget nothing should go to Greece, where there is nothing left to be seen but that ugly pigeon house the Temple of the Winds, that flycage Demosthenes' Lantern, and one or two fragments of a portico or a piece of a column crushed in a mud wall, and with such a morsel and with many quotations a true classic antiquary can compose a whole folio and call it 'Ionian Antiquities.'" Walpole's patronage of the classic taste from the serene height and chaste severity of Strawberry Hill, with its sham Gothic and cockle-shell grottos, is not undiverting. But a club which included names like Reynolds, Fitzwilliam, Charles Fox, Garrick, Colman and Windham was, we think, independent of the opinion in matters of taste of the Honourable Horace Walpole. Horry's portrait would hardly have improved those two famous groups of its members by Sir Joshua which we know so well from the engravings, with the portraits of Leeds and Greville, Crowle, Hamilton, Stanhope and the rest.

The Dilettante Society had a curious rule of fining their members upon accessions of wealth "by inheritance, legacy, marriage or preferment," and there is some humour in a list of these fines. Five guineas were paid by Lord Grosvenor on his marriage with Miss Leveson Gower. The Duke of Bedford's appointment as First Lord of the Admiralty was held to be worth eleven guineas to the society. The Duke of Kingston paid two guineas on his acquisition of a

colonelcy of horse; Lord Sandwich on going out as ambassador to Aix-la-Chapelle paid twenty guineas, and twopence three farthings on becoming Recorder of Huntingdon. The society was certainly lucky in getting nine and a half guineas from Mr. Charles James Fox on his appointment as Civil Lord of the Admiralty under Lord North.

The efforts of the Dilettante Society in the cause of the fine arts were continued until quite recent times; it is claimed for them that they were mainly concerned in obtaining a charter for the Royal Academy, and they were certainly very helpful in securing the Siris bronzes for the British Museum in 1820. Their convivial meetings still survive in their dinners on the first Sunday of every month from February to July.

There are two accounts of the origin of the "Sublime Society of Beefsteaks," but they both point to a room in the original theatre in Covent Garden as its first meeting-place, and both are convincing as to the ease with which the social instincts of Londoners of the last century were excited. One account makes the Earl of Peterborough go into the property-room of Mr. Rich the manager and share his modest hospitality of a steak cooked on the fire of the workroom. The other traces the origin of the society to the reception in his painting-room at the same theatre of "persons of distinction" by Mr. Lambert the scene painter. In both cases the charms of conversation led to a single visitor tasting the artist's steak, helped down with London porter and port from a neighbouring

tavern, and to the subsequent formation of a club of twenty members meeting weekly at the same place for the same purpose.

The weekly leisure of a great many notable men was spent at those meetings; William Hogarth, Francis Hayman, Churchill, Mr. Wilkes and Lord Sandwich, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Chase Price and the Prince of Wales. They stretched the limit of their club to twenty-five to include His Royal Highness in the year 1785. A little later came the social Duke of Norfolk, Charles Morris the laureate of the society, John Kemble and the Duke of Sussex. Later still such men as Brougham and Lord Eldon. The tradition of the society was nothing more than the joviality arising from these meetings to eat beefsteak and drink port wine, the only viands allowed by its rules. The chairman of the evening was always the butt of the rest of the company, and it was a rule that the member last elected should perform the office of butler and fetch the wine from the cellar. Lord Brougham was observed performing that useful service with great gravity, as was also the Duke of Leinster.

The club had the misfortune to be burned out of its habitation on two occasions: at Covent Garden in 1808, and at the Opera House in 1830. Of all its effects nothing remains but the gridiron upon which the first steak was cooked in 1735. It is pleasant, however, to remember that the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks still holds its meetings in rooms of its own in the Lyceum Theatre.

The most notable, perhaps, of all these famous gatherings which were the solace of the leisure of men of distinction throughout the eighteenth century, was that renowned society which gathered about Dr. Johnson at the Turk's Head in Gerard Street, Soho. A chance word let fall by Sir Joshua Reynolds gave the Doctor an opportunity for the exercise of those social qualities he so delighted to display, and the result came in those famous meetings of the "Club," christened later the Literary Club, in which the intellectual interest of those times seems to centre. It is too late in the day to attempt any description of those famous gatherings, which have employed the pens of the social historians from the days of Boswell to those of our own. But we mention the Literary Club here as the highest development of the periodical gatherings of men of distinction to dine at taverns which are so typical of the social life of London of that century. The incidents and the circumstances of that famous society are the landmarks of the literary history of modern England. What better presented the certainty of brilliant conversation to be expected in the dining-room at Soho than the admission of the Doctor that he took opposite sides against Burke quite independently of the merits of any particular question, and purely for the sake of the argument? The exclusiveness of that choice society which blackballed bishops and Lord Chancellors, and kept its own friends waiting for years for admission to its charmed circle because they expressed too much confidence of joining, is admirably

preserved in another of the Johnsonian anecdotes. "I think I'll be of you," said Mr. Garrick. "He'll be of us," said the Doctor, on hearing of David's remark from Reynolds; "how does he know we will permit him; the proudest duke in England has no right to hold such language." And so Mr. Garrick had to chafe outside the charmed circle for years, until his fault was expiated and an increase in the numbers of the club made his entry the easier.

That same increase was the occasion of one of the Doctor's most characteristic sayings, in which his pride of intellect is very happily presented. "It would give," opined Goldsmith, "an agreeable variety to our meetings, for there can be nothing new amongst us; we have travelled over each other's minds." "Sir," said the Doctor, "you have not travelled over my mind, I promise you."

"The room is before us," wrote Macaulay of that famous society, "and the table on which stand the omelet for Nugent and the lemons for Johnson; there are assembled those heads which live for ever in the canvas of Reynolds. There are the spectacles of Burke and the tall thin form of Langton, the courtly sneer of Beauclerc, and the beaming smile of Garrick, Gibbon tapping his snuff-box, and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure which is as familiar to us as the figures amongst which we have been brought up, the gigantic body, the huge massy face seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat and the black-worsted stockings, the

grey wig with the scorched foretop, the dirty hands, the nails bitten and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and the nose moving with convulsive twitches, we see the huge form rolling, we hear it puffing, and then comes the 'Why, sir,' and the 'What, sir,' and the 'No, sir,' and 'You don't see your way through the question, sir.'"

The small convivial societies of men, of which we have mentioned the famous ones only, have for the most part disappeared without leaving much trace of their influence on the social London of later times. In order to trace the history of the modern club we again turn to the meetings of the coffee-houses which we have described, and particularly to those fashionable and more or less exclusive societies which met at such establishments as White's Chocolate-house in St. James's Street.

It was, doubtless, the very popularity of the coffee-house which first suggested to the regular patrons of the more fashionable of such assemblies the desirability of some place of refuge from the chance visitor of a different condition; the Ned Wards, for example, who called for pipes in houses like Old Man's, devoted only to the cult of the "snush-box." There is no doubt about the inconveniences to the more reputable of the frequenters of the modish coffee-houses which attended the mixed company at the best of them, for the literature of the early years of the eighteenth century is full of allusions to it. We have mentioned the supposed meeting of the judge and the highwayman at

White's, which is no doubt apocryphal. But there is historical evidence of the visit of that eminent knight of the road, Mr. James Maclean, to Wills's. Farquhar, too, in "The Beaux's Stratagem," places two of his ruffians at Wills's and White's. Hogarth, in plate vi. of "The Rake's Progress," which is intended to suggest a meeting at White's Chocolate-house, shows a highwayman, with a pistol protruding from his pocket, waiting by the fire for the winner at the hazard-table to leave the house. Dr. Swift described White's as "the common rendezvous of infamous sharpers and noble cullies." It is, therefore, quite natural to find the first idea of a private club meeting daily in its own rooms originating amongst a set of fashionable men of means and leisure, such as that which gave White's its vogue, in order to avoid such doubtful company; and we may look to the existing White's Club in St. James's Street with the greatest confidence as the parent of all other institutions of the same kind.

The original White's Chocolate-house was the venture of a man named Francis White, who, in the year 1693, opened the place at a house on the site of the present Boodle's Club, No. 28, on the east side of St. James's Street, then a new part of the town. The undertaking was undoubtedly a bid for the support of the fashionable people, whose residences began to spread westwards towards the court after the great fire of 1666. It was, in fact, an attempt to adapt the conveniences of the coffee-house to the wants of a

class of patrons who had left the earlier houses of the same kind to the merchants and lawyers of the city and the Inns of Court. Francis White's speculation was quite successful from the first, for four years after opening his house at the present No. 28, he moved to larger premises on the other side of the street. His new house stood on the site of what is now the northern half of Arthur's Club, and there are portions of it which still remain and are included in the present club building. It is of those second premises of old Francis White that we must think as the famous White's Chocolate-house, which so soon attracted the attention of the town by the fashion of its patrons and their generous views in the matter of gaming. It was at White's that Dick Steele dated all his letters to the *Tatler* on the fashionable topics of the day; "all accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment," he says, "shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-house," and in the first number of that admirable paper he announced that the ordinary charges of a visit to White's were sixpence as against the customary penny of the average coffee-house. The news-sheets, too, of those early days contain many advertisements which point to White's as a place of 'vantage for modest dealings with people of great station. Mr. Heidegger issued his tickets for the masquerade from White's as the best of all places for approaching the most eminent of his clients, and if a beau left his sword in a chair, or a lady was bewailing the loss of her lapdog, it was at White's

that each should be returned in order to secure the promised reward.

It was at this favourite haunt, then, that the men of quality using it determined to have rooms of their own, and in giving effect to that decision they founded the first social club in London. The date of that interesting occasion is unfortunately uncertain. The first records of the existing club date from 1736 only, the year when White's Club, by that time an institution of great importance, reoccupied its old quarters, which had been rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1733. In that fire all the original records of the club disappeared; a fire, by the way, which had the distinction of being attended at four o'clock in the morning by his Majesty George the Second and his Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales.

We know, however, from other sources of information that old Francis White had died in 1711, and had left a modest fortune to his widow Elizabeth; that that lady continued a successful management of the Chocolate-house until somewhere between 1725 and 1729, and that in 1733, when the fire occurred, White's was under the management of John Arthur, who had been head servant to Francis White and his wife. The existing books of the club show that when the new house opened its doors in 1736, after a temporary sojourn at Gaunt's Coffee-house on the site of Mr. Bignell's present racing club at the lower end of the street, on the same side, "the club at White's" had been for years a notable institution of the town.

We take it that club life in London to-day differs little in essentials from the conditions that ruled that venerable institution in St. James's Street in the year 1736. The club, in its origin, was aristocratic, a lounging-place for the leisure of a lazy society, and although the borders of club life have since been widened by the social changes which have given leisure and affluence to other classes, the social club still remains a place where a man lays the cares of his work aside and diverts himself. A thousand tastes or interests to-day group men into clubs, where they find those tastes or interests flattered and supported by the companionship of men of the same way of thinking; sport, politics, social position. But most of those incentives to particular association are forgotten within the walls of a modern club, and it remains a quiet refuge from the distractions of business and from contact with the jostling of ordinary people; its attractions, in fact, are precisely those which led to the foundation of the first of the social clubs at White's Chocolate-house a couple of centuries ago.

There was one phase of the pleasantly easy life at White's which attracted the attention of the town from the first, and gave the club a reputation which clung to it for nearly a century. That was the prodigious rage for play, which we examine in detail elsewhere, and was seen at its high watermark at the fashionable meeting-place in St. James's Street. The whole literature of the century is full of allusions to the gaming at White's; all echoes of real events which



from time to time astonished the town. The third Duke of Bedford lost an immense sum to a notorious gamester, Sir Theodore Jansen, whose dealings at the gaming-table were not above suspicion, and the incident was at once enshrined in one of the Satires by Mr. Pope—

“As when a Duke to Jansen punts at White’s.”

The Earl of Orford told Swift that at the time of his ministry “he never passed White’s Chocolate-house without bestowing a curse on that famous academy as the bane of half the English aristocracy.” White’s and its gaming are mentioned several times in the “Dunciad,” and Mr. Pope himself added a footnote to the effect that it was “a noted gaming-house.”

But the gaming at White’s was only one phase of the life which passed within its doors, as is quite clear from the early records of the club as it was constituted in 1736, records which include a list of its members. Gaming was the natural amusement of a group of idle young men of means who were without a taste for field sports, athletic games, and the thousand ways of amusement which engage the energies of the youth of more modern times. As White’s was the favourite meeting-place of the young men of birth and leisure, it followed as a matter of course that the club took the lead in gaming as it did in the other follies of the time. But a short examination of the published list of its members is sufficient to prove that White’s had other claims to distinction. It was the club of many

of the great names of those days, the club of the great noble, of the courtier and the statesman, though not of the politician. Politics were laid aside at White's during the two centuries of its existence, except during the few years of the hottest of the rivalry between Mr. Pitt the younger and Mr. Charles James Fox, and the Tory tradition of White's which is so often quoted is really quite unwarranted by facts.

Among the men who met at the White's of the time of George the Second were Sir Robert Walpole on the one side, and William Pulteney on the other, a conjunction of names which would at once relieve White's from any reproach of party politics in those early days. Later came William Pitt and Henry Fox; and a generation later, when the rivalries of the sons of those two eminent men gave White's a party colour as the favourite club of the young Pitt, it is interesting to remember that Charles Fox was also a member of White's, and was frequently seen at the club. White's, indeed, has retained throughout its career the character it assumed from the first as the club of the well-born man of leisure, and that character is admirably supported by the list of its early members. Here were represented most of the great families of that day, Russells, Churchills, Pelhams, Stanhopes, Herveys, and Cavendishes. The witty Chesterfield was a noted member, and was accustomed to prepare his choicest *mots* to fire off "among the lads of quality at White's" until the rise of a later humourist, George Selwyn, who unfeelingly called his lordship Joe Miller, and

hinting at the careful preparation of his impromptu and repartees, drove him from the club. Members of White's filled most of the good offices and sinecures about the court and in the administrations of those days, and supplied most of the senior officers in the two services. Social distinction, in fact, was the chief qualification for membership of the first of the social clubs, and its pretensions as an appanage of the aristocracy were never better described than by Horace Walpole, who declared that when an heir was born to a great house, the butler went first to White's to enter his name in the candidates' book, and then on to the registry office to record the birth.

The whole tradition of club life in London is supported by this famous club for half a century at least; in fact, we are inclined to the belief that notwithstanding the claim of the Cocoa Tree to existence as a club, apart from the coffee-house, about the year 1747, White's was the only club, as we understand the word, in London until after George the Third came to the throne, when Almack's and Boodle's added two others to the number. In any case, we are quite safe in relying upon the history of White's as the source of all information worth counting upon regular club life, until the doings of the young men at Almack's startled the town during the few years following 1764.

The most striking feature, then, of the club life of the first half of the eighteenth century was its exclusiveness. Here was the only club in the town, which in 1736 had a total of eighty odd members on

its list, watching every candidate for admission with suspicion, and filling up its vacancies in the most leisurely fashion possible. For the first eight or ten years recorded in the existing books of White's Club, the elections averaged a little over half-a-dozen yearly, and club life in London was consequently represented in the days of George the Second by a company of gentlemen well under a hundred in number. The doors of this august assembly opened at rare intervals, and then only to men of great distinction, oftener than not the distinction gained on the field of battle. Among those few rare elections of the early days one notices such names as the Earl of Stair, with his record of fighting from the Boyne to Ramillies, and of his extraordinary diplomacy in Paris, where he astonished the French Court by the success with which he gained information and foiled the plots of the Pretender. Others of Marlborough's lieutenants were thought worthy of admittance to White's, Lord Ligonier and Lord Tyrawley; there were other famous soldiers like the Marquess of Granby, and sailors like Anson, who was elected in 1744 on his return from the famous voyage. The Duke of Grafton owed his election no doubt to his great station rather than to his eminence as a statesman, though he announced his intention of being "first minister, by G—d"; the Earl of Burlington of the first list of White's was the amateur architect and friend of Pope, and one of the few notable commoners of these scanty elections was Mr. Edward Gibbon, the father of the historian.

Such slow processes of election inspired by such fastidious choosing of their company, however, by no means satisfied the aspirations of intending clubmen of those times, and the state of things at White's led in 1743 to a curious proceeding on the part of such gentlemen as were dissatisfied with the ordinary accommodation of the coffee-house. These gentlemen established a second club, meeting at the same house in rooms of its own, and adopting the style and title of "The Young Club at White's," the original institution being thenceforward known as the "Old Club." The elders seem to have looked upon the junior concern with a mild and benevolent eye, and although, as we say, quite separate, with rules and a cook of its own, the Young Club at White's was ultimately accepted by those potentates as a place of purgatory or probation, where the young man might, by the blessing of Providence, become purged from all contamination of intercourse with ordinary people, and worthy of communion with their own charmed circle.

Occasionally a candidate for the Old Club passed quickly from the Young Club, but he was invariably a man of parts and possessed of great influence; young Mr. Charles Fox, for instance, was elected to both clubs at White's in the same year, owing no doubt to the efforts of his father, Lord Holland, who was a noted member of the Old Club. His friend George Selwyn, on the other hand, waited eight years in the junior concern, and another typical clubman of the same

set, Lord March, was consistently rejected year after year, and only joined the old society when the two clubs were merged in the year 1781. Most of the young men, indeed, who gave White's its fame as the meeting-place of the generous youth of the period, Horace Walpole, Dick Edgcumbe, Gilly Williams, Lord Coventry, Carlisle, and the rest passed their leisure in the rooms of the Young Club only. We may think therefore of the Young Club as the scene of the later glories of the dice-box; of the Old Club as the austere resort of the more sober members, that long line of stately figures which has given White's so great a distinction among clubs, a line which includes every Prime Minister of Great Britain from Sir Robert Walpole to Sir Robert Peel.

It was the younger men, of whom those we have named are the better known, who gave White's its character for gaiety and dissipation, and obscured for some time the more venerable character of its greater but quieter members. In thinking of White's of the last century one remembers George Selwyn oftener than Chatham, or Horace Walpole than his father the minister, and it is to the records of the doings of such choice spirits that one turns for information upon the typical club life of those days. Horace Walpole, especially, is helpful, Horace with his fine eye for the humorous and his admirable habit of putting all that he saw and much that he imagined on paper. Horry enjoyed himself thoroughly at White's, but with moderation, and when the fun became fast and furious

he would walk across the street and round the corner into his house at Arlington Street and write those remarkable letters which reflect the life of his times so admirably and in which doings at White's found frequent mention. There is much illuminative matter of the same sort also in that choice collection of letters from the young men about town at the club, letters which came to George Selwyn by every post whenever he and his friends were separated, half of them indeed written from the club-room itself.

Horry Walpole had gone home one evening in 1752 to Arlington Street, and was undressing when he heard a cry of "Stop thief," ran down into the street and assisted the watch in capturing a burglar in a neighbouring area. He had left George Selwyn at his cards at the club, and knowing that gentleman's taste for criminals, sent round a message, when the coffee-house "drawer" "stalked up into the club-room, stopped short, and with a hollow, trembling voice said, 'Mr. Selwyn, Mr. Walpole's compliments to you, and he has got a housebreaker for you.'" The news is irresistible, the whole club empties itself into Arlington Street and surrounds the burglar, who is walked off to the watch-house. Another evening at the club is realised without much exercise of the imagination from a letter by Mr. Richard Rigby written to George Selwyn in 1745. He was waiting, he said, "to hear the rattle of the coaches from the House of Commons in order to dine at White's." He went there "and sat till three in the morning," when "finding

nobody to sit with any longer but Boone, who was not able," he went to the Ridotto. "The next morning I heard there had been extreme deep play, and that Harry Furnese went drunk from White's at six o'clock, having won the dear memorable sum of one thousand guineas. He won the chief part off Doneraile and Bob Bertie." Such, we may suppose, was a typical evening at White's in 1745; supper say at ten o'clock, play all night, one man unable to sit in his chair at three o'clock in the morning, and a break up at six, with the winner going away drunk with a thousand guineas.

Walpole will tell us of a dinner of the club, "a folly of seven young men," as he calls it, which displays an extravagance which was rarer then than it is now. A Mr. St. Leger, "the hero of all fashion," as Walpole calls him, was the Amphitryon, and the arrangements included tarts made of "duke cherries from hot-houses," and the drinking of only one glass from each bottle of champagne. The bill of fare got into print, it appears, and, as Walpole says, "produced the apprehension of another earthquake."

That same earthquake of 1750, which much shocked the nerves of the town, seems to have left White's unmoved. Mr. Rigby and Mr. Leveson, on their way to the club from dining with the Duke of Bedford, thought it an appropriate occasion to assume the functions of the watchmen, who in those days proclaimed the hour of the night and the nature of the weather to the sleeping citizens. They knocked at

the doors of half Bloomsbury, and cried in the voice of the watch, "Past four o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake." At the club itself the serious nature of the visitation seems to have been unrecognised. "A parson came into White's in the morning," says Walpole, "and heard bets laid whether it was an earthquake, or the blowing up of powder-mills. I protest," said he, "they are such an impious set of people that if the last trumpet were to sound, they would bet puppet-show against judgment."

That mention of betting at White's reminds one of the extraordinary mania for wagering, in vogue about the middle of the last century among men of leisure, which was so conspicuous at White's, and is recorded at full in the published betting-book. There is a venerable story, quoted by Walpole, that a man dropped dead at the door of the house, was carried in, and the members immediately made bets as to whether he was dead or not; "and when they were going to bleed him, the wagerers for his death interfered, and said it would affect the fairness of the bet." This, as Walpole says, was only "a good story made on White's," but there are others no less remarkable recorded. There was Mr. Blake, for example, "one of the youth at White's, who," as Walpole tells us, "betted £1500 that a man could live twelve hours under water, hired a desperate fellow, sunk him in a ship by way of experiment, and both ship and man have not appeared since." Mr. Blake, as it would seem, proposed to renew the experiment.

The betting-book of the club contains no wager quite so outrageous as this, but there are many of an extraordinary character. Births, marriages, and deaths among the small society of that day were very favourite events upon which to risk large sums of money. One member of White's, Lord Montfort, alone registered sixty wagers on subjects of this description in the few pages of the early portion of the book which have survived, bets amounting in all to nearly six thousand pounds. Lord Montfort was reckoned the shrewdest man of his day, but his bets were less productive than was generally supposed, and the loss of his entire fortune at gaming of one sort or another drove him to suicide. On the 4th of November 1754, there was entered on the club betting-book the following wager: "Lord Montfort wagers Sir John Bland one hundred guineas that Mr. Nash outlives Mr. Cibber." The bet refers, of course, to the aged poet laureate Colley Cibber, and to the equally venerable Beau Nash, for so many years a prominent figure at Bath. Below this entry is the very significant note in another handwriting (quite possibly Horace Walpole's, who noticed the wager): "Both Lord Montfort and Sir John Bland put an end to their own lives before the bet was decided."

It was the last day of the same year that Lord Montfort spent his last evening at the club, supped there, and played whist until one in the morning. The following day he made his will, and shot himself almost in the presence of the lawyer and wit-

nesses. Sir John Bland, the seventh baronet of Kippax, who had lost every penny of his fortune at hazard at White's—thirty-two thousand pounds at one sitting, it was said—had shot himself in the previous September on the road from Calais to Paris. These events, as Walpole tells us, drew much attention to the excesses of gaming at the club, and if we are to take him literally, the people came to gaze at the building with awe and wonder. "The citizens put on their double channelled pumps," he writes, "and trudge to St. James's Street in expectation of seeing judgments executed on White's, angels with flaming swords and devils flying away with dice-boxes like the prints in Sadler's 'Hermits.'"

It was quite natural that incidents of the life at White's such as these should be the first to attract attention, and to find a place in the letters of the period to the exclusion of the details of the more regular life of the club which continued at the same time. The levities and tragedies of that life were a godsend to those gossiping scribes, and provided them with the materials for their most effective paragraphs. The letters of men like Walpole, Gilly Williams, and the other correspondents of George Selwyn, were full of the trivialities of the club-room at White's; of the Dukes of Grafton and Devonshire almost coming to blows over the bother caused by that famous *mésalliance* which convulsed the town when Harry Fox ran away with the Duke of Richmond's daughter—"the former defending it, the

latter a-tearing it to pieces;" of Lord Cobham forced to apologise to Lord Bristol in the full meeting of the club for having insulted his lordship by spitting in his hat at Lady Cobham's own assembly; of Lord Rockingham blushing when helped to sturgeon at the club, because his sister had run away with a man of low birth of the same name; of Lord Carlisle losing £10,000 at a cast of hazard; of the dreadful financial shortcomings of young Mr. Fox. Such chronicles as these reflect only one phase of the life at White's; the other is recorded in the history of the country. Every member of Mr. Pitt's great administration—that Government which buffeted the French all over the world, and raised the renown of England to a height it has seldom reached—is to be found in the list of members of White's; the great Pitt himself, the Grenvilles, Henry Fox, Newcastle, Bedford, and the rest. Club life in London, which was still represented solely by White's, must have had other attractions for men like these than the trifles we have mentioned which Walpole recorded so faithfully. And for the men, also, who carried out Pitt's schemes in all parts of the world, one would think, Rodney, Boscawen, Saunders, the Keppels, and Clive; and the men who fought later in America under less able direction from home—Burgoyne, Cornwallis, Howe, and Clinton.

Before George the Third came to the throne both clubs at White's had increased their numbers, and had

added these and many other names of distinction to their lists. Old White's had unbent to the extent of fixing a maximum of 120 members; the Young Club admitted as many as 230, so that the clubs together numbered 350 gentlemen of condition, who comprised the whole club life of London in 1755. This increase necessitated an increased accommodation, and in that year Robert Arthur, who had succeeded his father John as "Master of the House," moved with both clubs to the present club building, then known as "the Great House in St. James's Street." It was on the occasion of that removal, as we believe, that the transformation of coffee-house into club became complete, and White's Chocolate-house was extinguished. It is probable that the present Arthur's Club, established early this century, takes its name from a coffee-house continued at the old premises under the style of "Arthur's," and so perpetuates the name of a family who had been in charge of the premises since the days of old Francis White until the removal across the way in 1755.

When the brand new young King George the Third mounted the throne in 1760, the example of that young monarch's well-ordered life at St. James's, and his strict views of morality, had a great influence upon club life in London. It led almost immediately to a complete change in the tone of life at White's, indirectly to the foundation of another famous club, and eventually to the introduction of politics into club life. White's Club, without ever having been a

political organisation, had been a club of courtiers from the first, and was naturally affected by the views taken in social matters at St. James's. Old George the Second was never so happy as when winning or losing high stakes at hazard or faro with his subjects at court, and his relations with ladies like the Walmoden and Lady Suffolk are well known. But the glories of high play at court paled before the doings at the Young Club at White's, and the most celebrated of the ladies of a defined position, Kitty Fisher for instance, were supported by a regular subscription from the youth of the same institution. But when the young king assumed the sceptre one of his first acts was to banish the play tables from court with the Walmoden and the other appanages of his grandfather's establishment, and he marked his sense of the excesses which had made White's so famous by cashiering Robert Arthur, the Master of the House, who had held the office of clerk to the royal cellars under the old king. White's, as we say, was very ready to change its attitude in sympathy with this change in high places. One reads no more of the orgies of the dice-box at the clubs, but Walpole and Williams report continuously of the whispering and intrigues of politicians who were looking to gain or lose places upon the changes which must follow the efforts which the king and Lord Bute were making to trip up Mr. Pitt and the Whigs. Instead of the tale of the midnight sitting and the low jest, we have the remarks of those pleasant writers upon the portent of the Lord Cham-

berlain coming down to the club-room to stick up a notice as to the exact order in which the Irish peers should walk in the procession at the king's marriage with Queen Charlotte. White's, in fact, became a place of meeting for serious men of affairs, the old gaiety and revel were sadly curtailed under the new dispensation, and the careless youth of the period began to look out for a place more to their liking.

The only institution of the kind which existed in London and was available for those choice spirits was the present Boodle's Club, which, as the *Scavoir Vivre*, had opened its doors at the present building in St. James's Street in the year 1762. But the Boodle's of that year was hardly likely to attract the young men who had been bored with the dulness of White's. Boodle's took a tone at first of what in the slang of to-day is called "preciousness." It gave annual prizes for the best production in each of the fine arts, its balls and masquerades were reckoned fine, and it subscribed purses to famous tragedians and to the tuneful ladies of the Italian Opera. It is quite improbable that the present Cocoa Tree Club can be counted among the regular clubs of London of the year 1762. The coffee-house of the same name had, of course, been a meeting-place for Jacobites since the days of Anne, and later the house had acquired a name as the rendezvous of some of the noblest of the plungers at hazard. But the Cocoa Tree company was a small party of irreconcilables whose existence was barely acknowledged during the long ascendancy

of the Whigs, and was only just beginning to enjoy the importance as a social club which it attained shortly afterwards, when the fortunes of the Tory party brightened under the patronage of the king. As we have said, neither Boodle's nor the Cocoa Tree were institutions likely to attract the superfine youth who failed to amuse themselves at White's.

In 1764, accordingly, we find that twenty-seven young men of the day, all of them well under twenty-five years of age, and most of them hailing from White's, went to one M'Call, trading under the name of Almack as the proprietor of a coffee-house in Pall Mall on the site of the present Marlborough Club on the north side of the street. They enlisted Mr. Almack's services as master of the house, and founded a new club of their own, the famous Almack's, which we now know so well as Brooks's.

This new club became later, as the result of causes which we shall examine, the very head and front of the great Whig party, which eventually ranged itself against the policy of the king. But the origin of Almack's was, as we say, a revolt of the gay youth of 1764 against the ordered decorum of White's, and an effort to discover another place of meeting where the old rites of hazard and faro could be continued unmaimed. Almack's assumed from the outset the greatest pretensions to fashion; the young Dukes of Roxburghe, Richmond, Grafton, and Portland were among its original members, and its early elections included most of the famous young men about town

of those days, Mr. Crewe, Sir Charles Bunbury, Richard Fitzpatrick and his brother Lord Ossory, both the young Foxes, their cousin Lord Ilchester, who was a plunger of the noblest, and the young Lord Carlisle, who seems to have been a typical pigeon of the play tables. A little later came Selwyn and Horry Walpole, Gilly Williams and March, all now ranking somewhat as fogies of an older generation; later still young Mr. Sheridan and the Whigs like Burke, Erskine, and Lord Holland, and the intellectuals like Gibbon, Reynolds, and Garrick; last, not least, his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales and the Duke of York.

Almost from the first life at Almack's or Brooks's, as it was called after the second of its proprietors, was really the life of White's of the first half of the century writ large. The original rules of the club, which are given in Cunningham's "London Past and Present," provided that "every person playing at the new quinze table do keep fifty guineas before him," and that "every person playing at the twenty-guinea table do keep twenty guineas before him." Those rules serve, we believe, as an index of the objects of the founders, as does also the significant enactment that "no gaming be allowed in the eating-room except tossing for reckonings." It was necessary, apparently, to keep one room at least free from the excitement of play. In any case play revived at Brooks's in a splendour which quite surpassed all the early glories at White's, and was perhaps only equalled by the doings at Crock-

ford's during the first half of the present century. "Deep play is removed to Almack's," wrote Rigby to Selwyn in 1765, when the club was barely a year old, "where you will certainly follow it;" and for twenty-five years after that date, a period in which a bare half-dozen of knowing ones had acquired fortunes and the rest of the gamesters of the club had dissipated their substance among usurious Jews in their efforts to keep their places at the faro tables, the gaming at Brooks's was the wonder of the age.

We have examined this phase of life at Brooks's in our chapter on the play tables, and need not pursue it here, except so far as to trace its influence on the fortunes of the club. That influence was indeed a very potent one, and was brought to bear upon the fortune of Brooks's through the personality of one remarkable man, who very early in its history became the most prominent figure at the club. Mr. Charles James Fox was, as we see elsewhere, one of the noblest of the plungers at the play tables, and his eminence in that walk of life and in politics were attained almost at the same moment. Mr. Fox's first notable efforts in public life had taken the form of rather light-hearted revolts against his leader, Lord North, whom he had opposed on such measures as Royal Marriage Bills, and in so doing had deeply offended the king. His Majesty had written to Lord North that he considered "that young man had cast off every principle of honesty," and the royal scruples were increased fourfold by the reports which reached him of the

excesses of wine and hazard at Brooks's, in which Mr. Fox was the most eminent figure. Worst of all, the Prince of Wales, who was eager from the day he reached manhood to embrace every opportunity of making himself disagreeable to his Majesty, was pleased to honour Mr. Fox with his particular friendship and countenance, and to announce his intention of joining his friend's favourite club. From that time forward Brooks's was taboo at court, and party politics were introduced into club life for the first time.

This political aspect of club life was greatly intensified as time went on. In the first place, Fox's astounding abilities, and the wonderful charm of his nature, outweighed his numerous vices and failings, not only with his boon companions, but with the austerer spirits of the Whig party, men like Burke, Rockingham, Richmond, and the rest, who all gathered about their favourite at Brooks's. During all those distressing family quarrels, too, at St. James's, the Prince of Wales went to the club for counsel and advice. Fox, Burke, and Sheridan deliberated over his concerns, wrote his letters to the king and queen, and generally took his affairs into their keeping, Brooks's thus becoming the headquarters of the regular Opposition. The final seal of politics was placed upon the club in 1780, when young Mr. Pitt first appeared in public life.

Mr. Pitt, as we know, was at first hailed as a recruit by the Whigs; Burke, indeed, declared him to be Chatham come to life again, and Mr. Fox proposed

his name as a candidate for Brooks's, a fact alone sufficient to insure his election. But Mr. Pitt's sagacious ambition very early warned him that as long as George the Third was a power in the politics of the country, any ministry which contained Charles Fox was doomed. Mr. Pitt, therefore, very naturally elected to play for his own hand, renounced all idea of alliance with Fox and his party, and, as we know, succeeded in keeping the Whigs in opposition for nearly twenty years. Fox and his friends remained at Brooks's, Pitt withdrew to White's, and as long as those two great personalities remained in public life, the stormy politics of their times raged about the two clubs, and were directed from each.

We have no space here to follow the details of those contests which are part of the history of the times; how when the king's first fit of madness struck him, the two clubs almost contended for the custody of his person—Brooks's as representing the would-be regent, the Prince of Wales, Pitt at White's successfully supporting the claims of the queen. All the sordid details of those unseemly quarrels are identified with one club or the other; the Tories at White's read the hopeful bulletins of Willis, the mad-doctor, who reported his confidence in his Majesty's recovery; the more outspoken of the Whigs at Brooks's gloated over the pessimistic reports of their own party physician, Dr. Warren. It was said that the royal sons, George and Frederick, sat by at the card-table without protest, whilst gamesters said, "I play the lunatic," meaning

the king of the suit. In any case, Brooks's was convulsed with the politics of the next twenty years; it was agitated even beyond its wont when Mr. Orlando Bridgman came into the club-room and told Mr. Fox that the Prince of Wales had recently married Mrs. Fitzherbert, although that graceless royalty had that very day put up the innocent Mr. Fox in the House of Commons to deny that the match had taken place. All the vagaries of that royal scapegrace, his debts, his amours, his marriage, were the care of Brooks's Club until even their devotion could stomach his deceit and want of truth no longer. We may think of Brooks's, therefore, until the end of the eighteenth century, as the home of a small and dispirited political party; its social life poisoned by the dissensions which politics had introduced; even the rage for play which had founded the club thirty years before burned out among a body of exhausted spendthrifts. White's, on the other hand, was, as from the first, the haunt of a band of courtiers, a band of courtiers converted into a great political party by the great part played in politics by the king for the first time during four reigns. This tension of high politics in the club life of London, as represented by these two famous societies, was really only relieved by the death of the two great opponents in the same year, 1806. Brooks's has retained its political colour as the home of the Whig party ever since. White's almost immediately assumed its old character of a neutral meeting-ground for men of birth and condition.

Club life in London during the first ten years of the present century was still chiefly represented by the two clubs with whose origin and history we have been so far concerned. The Cocoa Tree continued a small association of gentlemen which has left little mark upon the social life of the town; Boodle's was gradually acquiring the reputation of a club of country squires devoted to fox-hunting, where all disputes connected with that sport, such as the boundaries of the counties hunted by particular packs, were eventually brought for settlement. There had been, it is true, a small club known as Goosetree's, dedicated to the practice of hazard and faro, which occupied Almack's old house in Pall Mall, now the Marlborough Club, after Brooks's went to the present club building in St. James's Street in 1778. But Goosetree's seems to have had a very short life, and the same may be said of two other unimportant clubs, Miles's and Evans's, of which there is bare mention in the letters of the times. In 1807 a gaming club, at which was played a game of cards called Macao for very high stakes, was opened by Watier, the Prince of Wales's *chef*, at the corner of Bolton Street and Piccadilly, and called after his name. Watier's owed its origin to the Prince of Wales himself, as a place where the members of both White's and Brooks's, who grumbled sadly at the cookery of their own clubs, might get an eatable dinner. It was seized upon by the gamblers, who were now frowned upon at both White's and Brooks's, and came to a premature end in 1819, by which date, as Mr. Raikes

of the "Diary" records, the members were, almost without exception, ruined. The officers of the Guards, wearying of their accommodation at the St. James's Coffee-house which had been long their meeting-place, opened the present Guards' Club in 1813, and the present Arthur's Club was founded about the same year in the building on the site of the house occupied by Francis White and his successors, the Arthurs, as we have already said. But to all intents and purposes the club life of London was still centred in the two old establishments in St. James's Street, White's and Brooks's.

Life at both of these clubs underwent a great change during the opening years of the century; the softening of the rivalry between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox which preceded the year of their death; the disappearance of both from the stage in 1806; above all, the declining influence of George the Third in political matters, removed most of the distractions from both clubs. The dangerous attraction of *faro*, which had prevailed up till about 1790 at Brooks's, was now exchanged for the less dangerous fascination of whist for high stakes. At White's, *faro* had been forbidden by the rules, and the high play of the early period of hazard had never been revived. The unrestrained gaming, which was still a passion with the average man of leisure and property, was indulged in elsewhere, at any of the numerous gaming-houses of the West End, but it was discouraged at the older clubs. The attractions of both play and politics were thus removed from both

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White's and Brooks's, and were exchanged for that extraordinary cult of male fashion which had its headquarters at White's and was practised at both clubs, until the opening years of the reign of her present Majesty, by the relatively small body of men known then and since as the Dandies.

The reign of the Dandies was in reality a social tyranny exercised by a few score men over the great body of their social equals. Here was no question of a proud society resisting the advances of a rank of life below it; the whole movement was the assumption by a small coterie of men of fashion of a social superiority above their fellows, and the supporting of their pretensions by an arrogance which had been unknown in polite society before their day. The inspiration was supplied by that pattern of fine gentlemen the Prince Regent, at a time of life when the charm of his youth had disappeared, and it was imparted to such among the younger men in St. James's Street as were found worthy by the incomparable Mr. Brummell.

Mr. Brummell was a man whose origin was distinctly middle-class. His father was factor, or agent, or personal secretary to Lord North, and he had aunts living in the persons of two excellent old ladies named Searle, who by the favour of the old king occupied one of the lodges in St. James's Park, kept cows, and sold syllabubs. It was in their dairy, indeed, that Mr. Brummell first met his patron the prince. That meeting led to the presentation by the prince of a commission in the army which Brummell held for

three years only. He sold out in 1798, and was in that year elected to White's. Between that year and the year 1816, when he fled to Calais leaving half the tradesmen of the West End in lamentation, his life work was accomplished. He had placed himself at the head of the male society of his day at White's and had founded the cult of the Dandies.

That extraordinary body has excited great admiration both in its own day and since, but it was really little more than the cult of a coat and a neckcloth at best. "Peel is no gentleman," said his Majesty King George the Fourth; "he parts his coat tails before sitting down." It excluded every really eminent man of the period from its ranks, and its most admirable members were men who were witty and pleasant to their fellows, rude to all others, and a curse to their tradesmen.

One hesitates to believe a tenth of the stories told about Beau Brummell, the very high priest of the shrine—which was the bow-window at White's thrown out over the steps of the old entrance in 1812—of his insolence to the prince, and his brutal rudeness to women, because he undoubtedly went through life with a whole skin at a time when such conduct was apt to produce personal chastisement. But there is little doubt that a general portrait of the man is conveyed in those oft-quoted anecdotes; his request to the prince, "George, ring the bell;" his stress on the word "mistress" in ordering Mrs. Fitzherbert's carriage in the same august presence; his query to Lady Jersey,

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who was dancing with his royal highness, "Who's your fat friend." He would take a cutlet from his plate at luncheon in a strange house, and throw it to a pet dog, with the remark, "See if you can get your teeth through it, I'll be damned if I can." When asked about his parents he replied, "The poor old creatures both cut their throats years ago eating peas with a knife." He ordered a servant to empty his snuff-box into the fire because a bishop took a pinch unasked at the prince's table. And yet upon the man of whom these stories are told the male fashion of an entire generation was content to model itself, and his influence died only within living memory.

The men who followed Mr. Brummell, and upon whom his mantle descended, were better fellows, but they made club life at White's and Brooks's well-nigh unendurable to any but their own set. At White's they appropriated special seats, used special slang of their own, and frowned upon the ordinary members who were daring enough to dispute such places with them. As Mr. Alfred Montgomery said, he would as soon have thought of taking his seat in the throne in the House of Lords as of taking a place in the bow-window of White's. Their savage blackballing decimated the club during a period of twenty years, and at last rendered necessary an alteration of rules which placed the ballot in the hands of a committee in order to save the club from extinction.

The astonishing pretensions of the Dandies, which made White's and Brooks's impossible for the average

man of leisure during the first thirty years of this century, led inevitably to the establishment of other social clubs which might be free from their tyranny. There were many men of assured position who resented the attitude of the superfine band at the two older clubs, and who had little reverence for the memory of Mr. Brummell. "D—n the fellows," said Colonel Sebright of the Guards, as he saw two of them in the bow-window at White's, "they are upstarts, and fit only for the society of tailors." When Waterloo brought peace and a period of rest to the country after a quarter of a century of national anxiety, there came an expansion of social life in London very similar to that we noticed a century earlier when the country settled down after the wars of Marlborough. The antics of the Dandies at the ballots at White's and Brooks's were at once a refusal of those choice spirits to widen their own charmed circle in sympathy with the spirit of the times, and a reason for numbers of eligible men of breeding and condition to form themselves into other societies.

As early as 1808, travelled men of leisure, men of letters, bishops and judges, formed the Alfred Club in Albemarle Street, which was merged in the present Oriental Club in 1855. A similar society was the Travellers', founded in 1814. The Travellers' owes its origin to the initiative of Lord Castlereagh, who projected the club as a meeting-place for gentlemen who had travelled "five hundred miles from London in a straight line," and as a place of entertainment for

distinguished foreign visitors. In 1815 military and naval men established themselves at the United Service Club, and in so doing added one more to the two service clubs in being at that time, the Guards' and the Royal Naval Club. The year 1824 saw no fewer than four new clubs established in London, all of which are flourishing to-day. Sir John Malcolm founded the Oriental for travellers and residents from the East; men of science and letters like Sir Humphry Davy, Scott, Moore, and Croker conceived and carried out the idea of the stately Athenæum; old Oxford and Cambridge men formed the University Club; men of substance from the city first foregathered at the Union. In 1828 Lord Nugent was instrumental in gathering together "a society of gentlemen connected by a common bond of literary or personal acquaintance," a society which we still know as the Wyndham. Three years later "the patrons of the drama and its professors" established a society of their own at the Garrick Club, in King Street, Covent Garden.

It is from the years immediately preceding the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 that we date the first of the great political clubs. The Tories who surrounded the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel in those days of strenuous politics, "found White's too neutral in tone," as we learn from Mr. Raikes, and established in 1831, in the Carlton, an institution of the right Tory colour. Brooks's, as we saw, became a home of the Whig party only by accident. It never lost the Whig flavour which it

acquired in the days of Charles Fox, and the great Reform Bill itself may be said to have been incubated in its rooms. But the Brooks's of 1832 included so many reactionaries in its list that the forward spirits of the Liberals felt the necessity of a meeting-place of their own, and so founded the Reform Club as a counterblast to the Tory Carlton.

Since that year, which was the real beginning of the period we call the nineteenth century, the era of railways, of easy communication, of cheap corn, and of industrial prosperity, club life in London and elsewhere has shared to the full in the wonderful developments of the times. Its present importance in the social life of to-day is evident to all who know the town, and need not be enlarged upon here. The imagination, indeed, reels at the thought of London without its clubs. It is true that the sojourning of men at clubs is popularly supposed to be a domestic grievance of a character as unjustifiable as it is acute. But this is a question which, like every other, has two sides, and its true bearings may perhaps best be grasped by endeavouring to realise some unthinkable convulsion which should in a moment restore the clubmen of London to the bosoms of their families.

CHAPTER XII

OF SUNDRY DIVERSIONS

IF any one familiar with the social annals of the two centuries which preceded the reign of her present Majesty were asked to characterise the entertainments which delighted Londoners of all classes throughout that term, he might reply without much hesitation that they were as much distinguished for their naïveté as for their brutality. There were never, in modern times, audiences more easily moved to laughter or so delighted with the spectacle of bloodshed and suffering as gatherings of Londoners during the two hundred years which ended with the reign of William the Fourth. People of condition in the reigns of Anne and the Georges flocked to the Strand or to Covent Garden to see waxworks at Mrs. Salmon's, or puppet-shows at Mr. Powell's, or to watch Mrs. Saraband's dogs and monkeys going through the operations of a siege with toy cannons and scaling-ladders. A hundred years later they were just as delighted with mountebanks like Katerfelto and quack doctors like Graham with his mud-baths and his Celestial bed.

Side by side with these innocent simplicities flourished the brutalities which we have examined in

our inquiries into the humours of Hockley, the cockpit and the prize-ring, the last two at least of which famous institutions depended upon the support of well-to-do people for their prosperity and development. So too with the great mass of the people, separated in those days much more sharply from the classes than to-day. They delighted, as we have seen, in the primitive joys of Bartholomew's Fair or the tea gardens, and were always ready to see much fun in the spectacle of a man grinning through a horse-collar. From such innocent diversion they would turn with joy to the horrors of the duck hunt or the cockshy; and a good place of 'vantage from which to see old Lovat's head roll on the scaffold at the Tower, or Jack Rann swing into the air at Tyburn Tree, was held worth while spending the previous day to secure.

Both these aspects of the amusements of the town of our ancestors are strange to modern ideas. Whatever else may be said of the modern entertainments which appeal to the tastes and the purses of the London of to-day, it will not be contended that they lack humanity or err on the side of simplicity in execution or design. The virtues of contrast are not inconsiderable, and it may therefore be convenient here to recall to a London sated with the spectacular glories of the Lyceum or the Haymarket the simple histrionic entertainments which were good enough for some of their ancestors. It may also not be uninteresting, with the spectacle of 60,000 people watching

a League football match at the Crystal Palace in the mind's eye, to recall for a moment the much simpler entertainments of Spa Fields which drew together the crowds of the middle of the eighteenth century. Finally, we do not fully realise what we owe to a better state of public opinion in the matter of our treatment of animals, until we have investigated some of the minor sports which kept lower-class London amused until an Act of Parliament in 1835 established a standard of humanity which the public has happily accepted and improved. Such an inquiry will, as we believe, include some items of interest, and will enable us to conclude our work with the consideration of some minor diversions which fall outside the more or less artificial limits of the separate subjects which the scheme of our task has so far suggested as convenient.

The naïveté of the audiences of the early part of the last century, and the ease with which they were amused, appear very plainly, we think, in the success which rewarded some very simple and curious entertainments of a spectacular character, which, by reason of that success, became serious competitors of the legitimate drama at Drury Lane. We have already glanced at the puppet-shows of the great fairs; but these exhibitions were by no means confined to the audiences of those popular meetings. Great people flocked to Mr. Powell's establishment under the Piazza in Covent Garden in numbers which seriously reduced the takings of the patent houses, and ham-

pered the progress of the exotic opera, then lately introduced into England.

It is pleasant to think of well-bred audiences delighted with the productions of Mr. Powell; plays of marionettes beginning with the Garden of Eden, dealing with most of the great names from the Deluge onward, and varied with a *divertissement* of Punch and Judy dancing in Noah's ark, Punch subsequently seating himself on the Queen of Sheba's lap, fighting the Duke of Lorraine, and selling the King of Spain a bargain. It was, as we say, such diversions as these that amused the quality of Anne and George the First, and emptied the patent theatres; puppet-plays founded upon such themes as Dick Whittington, Dr. Faustus, Mother Goose, "together with the pleasant and comical humours of Valentine, Nicolini, and the tuneful warbling pig of Italian race," as one of Mr. Powell's handbills recites. Penkethman and Mrs. Saraband, Crawley and Flockman were all managers who kept alight the sacred fire of the puppet-show until near the end of the century, greatly to their own advantage, and the marionettes of our own time are thus only a revival.

Mrs. Salmon's waxworks, too, exhibited at a house in Fleet Street near Temple Bar, had a success which foreshadowed the later glories of Baker Street. The show included a figure of Mother Shipton near the door, which gave a facetious kick to the visitor on leaving. One envies an age when Mrs. Midnight's Oratory in the Haymarket kept the town amused for

years with its "noted ox with six legs and two bellies, its male and female acrobats," its "fire-eater smoking out of red hot tobacco pipes, champing lighted brimstone and swallowing his infernal mess of broth." Then, a good deal later, the ingenious Frenchman M. Bisset astonished the town and cleared £1000 in a few weeks with his Cats' Opera and troupe of other animals; monkeys taking wine together, riding on horses, and dancing minuets with dogs. One of M. Bisset's hares walked on its hind legs and beat a drum, and, it may be, provided the model for those delightful white rabbits of our nurseries which go through the same performance. M. Bisset also induced his six turkeys to walk through the steps of a country dance, and surely well deserved the fortune which a delighted London presented him in exchange for these diversions.

From Mr. Powell's puppets to the pantomime was but a step, and the audiences which patronised the one delighted in the other, to the despair of the poor actors. Pantomime, like Opera, crept into England at the beginning of the eighteenth century, "comique masques in the high style of Italie" were announced, and a ballet at Drury Lane of the Loves of Mars and Venus, where the whole story was told by gesture (with some omissions, it may be hoped), foreshadowed the real pantomime which soon followed. Rich at the Lincoln's Inn Theatre produced a piece called "Harlequin Executed" in 1717, which is accepted as the first real pantomime by historians of the stage.

Mr. Rich brought out his pantomime to compete with Mr. Cibber at Drury Lane, who was there beating him in his presentation of the legitimate drama, and actors as a body deplored the innovation for half a century. Harlequin springing appropriately enough from a bed of tulips or a rainbow, amused the town rather more than the pompous mannerisms of the players of the pre-Garrick period. Harlequin, indeed, played by good actors like Woodward, was a very favourite character until the days when the incomparable Grimaldi exalted that of the clown at his expense. Even Garrick himself found the pantomime a serious rival, and was wont to reproach his audiences in the prologues and epilogues which he turned so neatly. The wits and essayists used to make very merry over the innocent absurdities of the pantomime which the quality found so much to their taste; Mr. Pope, for example—

“Thence a new world, to Nature’s laws unknown,
Breaks out refulgent with a heaven its own,
Another Cynthia her new journey runs,
And other planets circle other suns;
The forests dance, the rivers upwards rise,
Whales sport in woods and dolphins in the skies.”

To glance at the other end of the century there was no sensation more popular with the leisured classes than the silly performances of the medical mountebank. It was the well-bred idler and his womenkind who supported Katerfelto and Doctor Graham. To modern ideas there seems little attraction in Katerfelto’s

programme. He took advantage of an epidemic of influenza to work upon the nerves of audiences with magic lanterns and fearsome images of microbes and animalculæ. His darkened rooms, black cats, and electric machines impressed his visitors hugely, instead of anticipating the fairly obvious fact later established by a magistrate, when his fire balloons set haystacks alight, that he was a rogue and a vagabond.

Dr. Graham, we suppose, was a shade better; he certainly had a very gratifying success, but then the Doctor had the advantage of the help of the peerless Emma, in the flower of her youth and beauty, before she began to sit for Mr. Romney or had captivated ambassadors and admirals. At a house in the Adelphi, and later at Schomberg House in Pall Mall, you might see Emma and the Doctor sitting in separate mud-baths up to their necks, Emma's hair being wondrously dressed in the mode with powder, flowers, and ropes of pearls, and the Doctor's wig a marvel of the perruquier's skill. Another day you might hear the humbug lecture on perpetual youth and beauty, his theories illustrated by the blooming nursemaid in the flesh as the "Goddess of Health." Then there was the Celestial Bed, which held forth great attractions for those wanting heirs, "the rosy Goddess of Health assisting at the celestial matters," as we learn from the Doctor's advertisement, "and that sacred Vital Fire over which she watches." "The descriptive exhibition of the apparatus in the daytime is conducted by the junior officiating priest," an announcement which

comes as a distinct bathos. It may interest the curious in small matters to know that the "junior officiating priest" became later Dr. Mitford, the father of the authoress. With such attractions as these Dr. Graham contrived to fill his rooms with a mob of silly people at five shillings a head.

A quite different entertainment, which had a vogue almost at the same time, and may claim the paternity of all modern developments of the circus, was the equestrian entertainment of Mr. Philip Astley in Lambeth. Astley's Amphitheatre, which was only finally extinguished in 1862, began in very modest surroundings. Astley himself had served under General Eliot, Lord Heathfield, who gave him a horse, which he christened Gibraltar, and which with another formed his whole stud. Strutt, the historian of all sports and pastimes, says: "Riding upon three horses at once, while they are at full speed, is, I believe, a modern species of exhibition introduced to public notice about forty years back by a man named Price, who displayed his abilities at Dobney's, near Islington. Soon afterwards a competitor of the name of Sampson made his appearance, and he again was succeeded by Astley."

Whether Mr. Strutt is here quite accurate does not concern us; at a guess, Jacob Bates at Newmarket was antecedent to all these artists enumerated by the antiquarian. Astley may have got a hint from the others, but he was undoubtedly a

pioneer in his business, and should be canonised as the patron saint of all ringmasters. He set up his first show in a field at Halfpenny Hatch, his only enclosure a rope and stakes, and his revenues whatever oblations he could extract from passers-by. The rope and stakes later gave place to a slight paling, on the very spot where now stands Waterloo Station. Here, in the words of his own handbill, might be seen "the activity on horseback of Mr. Philip Astley, Sergeant-Major in his Majesty's Royal Regiment of Dragoons. Nearly twenty different attitudes will be performed on one, two, and three horses, every evening during the summer at his riding school. Doors to be open at four, and he will mount at five. Seats, one shilling; standing places, sixpence."

A strange figure is this of the energetic, strenuous ex-dragon, which one comes across so frequently in the records of the last quarter of the century—a figure in every way representative of the successful semi-professional men who then controlled so many of the amusements of the town. A midday stroll in the West End would usually bring one in contact with the dragoon himself mounted on his white horse Gibraltar, distributing his own handbills, and pointing with his sword in the direction of his show across the river in a very gallant manner. A creditable career was that just opening for the ex-soldier with his modest stud of two horses, his faithful wife taking the shillings at the gate, and providing

orchestra with a big drum. Astley's prospectus offered to "teach the true and perfect seat on horse-back. Mr. Astley undertakes to break in the most vicious horse in the kingdom for the road or field, to stand fire, drums, &c. No gentleman need despair of being a complete horseman that follows his directions, having eight years' experience in General Eliot's regiment."

People of all sorts and conditions flocked to Mr. Astley's modest entertainment; the patent holders grew jealous, and lodged an information against him, and things began to look black for the struggling ex-dragon. Then his Majesty George the Third himself happened to come over Westminster Bridge on a restive horse, and Mr. Astley recognising his opportunity, showed his knowledge and presence of mind, pleased the king by his address, and obtained a royal licence, which effectually silenced his rivals. Luck then came to Philip in a shower. He scraped together £200 from the earnings of his poor show, and invested it on mortgage of a piece of waste ground at Westminster. The mortgagor went abroad and was never heard of again; and Astley, foreclosing, walked into a fine site containing a most accommodating stock of timber ready for building purposes. About the same time he picked up a diamond ring worth £70 on Westminster Bridge, and his poor show of stakes and railings was converted into a handsome riding-school with a roof over the heads of the most important of his customers, and he was

able to advertise that he would "perform every evening, wet or dry." The town now began to flock to the new entertainment, reinforced as it was by young Master Astley, aged five years, who took the title part in "Billy Button's Ride to Brentford." "Whitefield never drew so much attention as a mountebank does," wrote Boswell; "were Astley to preach a sermon standing upon his head on a horse's back, he would collect a multitude to listen to him." Even the critical Mr. Horace Walpole went to Astley's and found much to admire. "I could find nothing to do at all," he wrote in 1783, "and so went to Astley's, which, indeed, was beyond my expectation. Astley can make a horse dance minuets and hornpipes."

There was no end to Astley's enterprise. He brought out a new acrobatic entertainment, common enough now, but excellently novel and effective, no doubt, with the public of his day—a pyramid of men, four supporting three on their shoulders, the three two, and the two a single individual, who formed the apex. "The Hercules Pyramid," as he called it, gave its name to streets and taverns as well as to Astley's own house. Then he felt the want of a roof for the centre of his premises so as to shut out the elements altogether. Her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales happened to die at the moment, and Mr. Astley bought the timber used for the scaffolding at her obsequies for a song. Later he wanted more, and mixing with the mob

at an election, whose playful custom it was to make bonfires of the hustings on such occasions, he intimated that beer would flow in a liberal stream if the timber, instead of being burnt, were carried to his yard. With material thus acquired he roofed in his arena, and as the idea of horsemanship under a roof was much criticised, he met such carpings by painting his dome to represent the branches of trees, and by christening it the "Royal Grove."

A man of infinite resource was Astley. Captain Cook's death moved London to much curiosity and interest, and Mr. Astley provided "a grand equestrian dramatic Spectacle" founded upon that tragedy. An equestrian spectacle upon the death of the famous navigator is rather suggestive of the horse marines to the modern intelligence, but it was very popular with the London of George the Third, and helped Astley to further great successes. By 1792, indeed, Astley was able to turn over the chief cares of his undertaking to his son, and on the outbreak of the Revolutionary war in the following year he made a great success in his management of the embarkation of the cavalry, and finally he went through the campaign with the Duke of York.

"The Grove" was burned in 1794, and Astley's Amphitheatre of Arts arose on its ashes. At the Peace of Amiens he succeeded, much to every one's surprise, in obtaining compensation from Buonaparte for the occupation of his branch circus in Paris as a barrack by the Republican troops. Astley was one of

the English who were imprisoned on the renewal of the war, but he escaped to the frontier disguised as an invalid French officer. He reached England only to find his wife dead and his theatre again destroyed by fire, by which stroke of ill luck he lost a sum of £30,000. It was rebuilt as the Amphitheatre which some of us remember. Philip Astley died in Paris during the occupation of that city by the Allies in 1814, and lies buried in Père la Chaise. It was just seven years after that his son died in the same bed of the same room of the same house, and lies buried in the same grave. They both, like Heidegger, Tyers and others, claim mention here as men whose fortunes were made by devoting their energies to the amusement of the London of their day.

Turning from these and other regulated amusements for which coin of the realm was exchanged, let us glance at some impromptu revelries which drew thousands of the people to open spaces like Spa Fields, just off the present Gray's Inn Road. These fields were a very favourite resort for the lower classes of Londoners, and during fine weather there was usually a ready-made audience at the disposal of any enterprising entertainer. Here much cudgel-playing or single-stick took place, and a man might graduate in that art for the brighter glories of Hockley, or Figg's amphitheatre. "Two women fought for a new shift valued at half a crown in the Spa Fields, New Islington," says a newspaper of 1768; "the battle was won by a woman called Bruising Peg, who beat her anta-

gonist in a terrible manner." In the summer of the same year, as we learn, "an extraordinary battle was fought in the Spa Fields by two women against two taylors for a guinea a head, which was won by the ladies, who beat the taylors in a severe manner."

The grinning match, too, was a favourite diversion at Spa Fields and similar places near the town like St. George's Fields or Brixton Causeway. At St. George's for example, in 1711, a Mr. Shanks contrived to assemble a great company for a grinning match. "The prize was a gold-laced hat, and the competitors were exhilarated by music and dancing." Near the same time a gold ring was danced for and a hat given as a prize for skittles at the Greengate, near Lambeth Wells. The authorities were fully aware of the value of such assemblies of British manhood as these delights drew together for the purposes, to put it mildly, of recruiting. In 1779 they offered an ox roasted whole and unlimited beer to the "friends of their king and country," a delicate way of hinting at the virtues of enlistment. They offered also "two gold-laced hats as prizes for the two best cudgel-players; a gown, a shift, and a pair of shoes and stockings, to be run for by four old women; three pounds of tobacco and a silver-laced hat to be grinned for by three old men, the frightfullest grinner to be the winner!" We are fortunate in being able to supply some details of the meeting which these attractions drew together. These appeared in the *Clerkenwell Chronicle* in August

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1779. "At seven o'clock A.M.," says the report in that journal, "the ox being roasted, came a sergeant and a number of deputy sons of the sword. The sergeant made an elegant speech, at which every one gaped in astonishment, because no one could understand it. At half-past two the beef was taken up, slices cut and thrown among the crowd, and many an one caught his hatfull to fill his belly." We read that "the winner of the gown was a loser, as she tore off the skirt in attempting to get it on." It was estimated that forty to fifty thousand people were present. "Beer was drunk out of pots without number and without measure," says the *Chronicle*. "Some men were enlisted, but more were impressed, as the bloodhounds were on the scent, and ran breast high," a remark which explains the hospitality of the government as represented by the sergeant and the deputy sons of the sword.

Other assemblies very typical of the ease with which the people of the Georgian times amused themselves were those joyous gatherings known as the Garrat Elections. Garrat is, or was, a hamlet on the south side of the Wandsworth High Street, and included at one time a small common. Some encroachment on the right of the commoners about 1750 led to an association of those worthy people, who elected a mayor to look after their rights. The time of the election of the first mayor of Garrat happened to coincide with that of a general election, and it was decided by the commoners that the office of their

representative should endure and expire with each Parliament. The publicans, with a sagacious appreciation of the possibilities of these gatherings and their effect upon their own interests, subscribed a purse for the necessary expenses, and the Garrat Election became a highly popular parody of the real article. As time went on such men as Mr. Garrick and Mr. Wilkes did not disdain to assist by writing the addresses of the candidates.

The first member for Garrat was "Sir" John Harper. The successful candidate, observe, always assumed the style and title of a knight. Sir John in private life was an eminent dealer in brick-dust, and he sat for two Parliaments. Sir Jeffrey Dunstan succeeded Sir John, and retained his seat during no less than three Parliaments. He was a purveyor of old wigs by profession, a man of sardonic wit, and altogether the most famous of the Garrat members. During the alarms of the French Revolution Mr. Pitt thought Sir Jeffrey's political jokes worthy of prosecution and Sir Jeffrey's person worthy of incarceration. In 1797 Sir Jeffrey was defeated by Sir Harry Dimsdale, and incontinently drank himself to death. Sir Harry was a muffin-seller of repute, but he died before his Parliament expired, and no independent candidate being worthy to succeed him the seat has since remained vacant.

These burlesque elections were attended by prodigious numbers of people, and were the occasion of much riotous horseplay. Sir Richard Phillips estimates

an average attendance at a hundred thousand, an estimate it is as difficult to accept as to refute. There was much fun of a primitive type at the Garrat Election, the candidates being dressed always in a caricature of the prevailing mode, which would include the dress of Mr. Horace Walpole's middle years, the Macaroni equipment of Mr. Charles Fox of the seventies, and the knee breeches and top boots of Sir John Lade at the end of the century. Peers of the realm unbent so far as to drive the candidates to the hustings in their lordships' own carriages and six; the houses of the neighbourhood were at a premium during the contests, and Mr. Foote paid nine guineas for a single window in 1761, and has recorded his impressions of the scene in a very dull piece.

It would seem that successive generations of Londoners have failed altogether to appreciate the capacities of their fine river as a playground. Until our own times its value as a highway was recognised to the full, so much so, that even as late as the Regency, it was computed that the number of wherries on the Thames exceeded that of the hackney coaches on the streets by many thousands. Hansom cabs, omnibuses, and underground railways have since reversed the relations of land and water in London in this particular. But the scanty festivities which used to enliven the river from time to time have one by one departed, and at this end of the nineteenth century the Thames, for all purposes of delight or solace to the Londoner, remains as barren and as utilitarian

as the invisible but useful Fleet Ditch which still flushes our sewers.

The Thames is no longer even possible for bathing ; but it is not uninteresting to recall the fact that from Stuart times until the days of George the Fourth it was no uncommon sight to see a well-known man about town disporting himself in the river between Westminster and London Bridge. "Dudley North," says Roger North in his "Lives" of that family, "used to swim in the Thames so constantly, and above bridge too, that he could live in the water an afternoon with as much ease as others walk on land." Nearly a century later the tenth Earl of Pembroke was so fond of the same diversion that the facetious Lord Chesterfield in pleasant allusion to his habit, addressed a letter "To the Earl of Pembroke, in the Thames, over against Whitehall." Mr. Benjamin Franklin, too, has left record of a swim which he took through London from Lambeth to London Bridge in the reign of George the Third. Perhaps the last of the distinguished men to keep up the tradition of public bathing in London was Lord Byron, who in 1807 anticipated his exploit in the Hellespont by taking the water at Lambeth and swimming down three miles with the tide. It is said that until the days of the great riverside embankments, the Westminster boys were still accustomed to disport themselves in the unattractive waters of the Thames of those days. The last vestiges of bathing in the river seem to have disappeared with the floating

swimming bath at Charing Cross some twenty years ago.

The waters of the Thames appear to have conferred a privilege of free speech in former days which was not always enjoyed on land, and this may have tended to keep fashion on its banks. It is certain that the great people who took boat to Vauxhall and often hired a satellite bark provided with a band of French horns, did so as much for a protection from the badinage of the river as for any enjoyment to be derived from the music. It was the pride and joy of the average boatload of apprentices from the city to unite the vulgarity of their whole company in an epithet of suitable brevity, and fire it off upon every passing boatload of their betters they encountered on the voyage. Great minds like Dr. Johnson's were often employed in returning an appropriate reply, as we know from a famous rejoinder of that great man. One finds allusion to these pleasantries of the Thames at intervals throughout two centuries. "The Thames," says Malcolm, "seems to have a charter for rudeness, and the sons of Triton and Neptune have not only a freedom of, but a licence for, any sort of speech, and the privilege by being so ancient has become incontestable. Crowned heads did not in former times go scot free." We gather from some particulars which Malcolm proceeds to quote, that when the state barge of Charles the Second went up the river from Whitehall, Queen Catherine was sometimes reminded by her subjects of the largeness of the king's

family and the emptiness of the poor queen's own nursery.

One reads, too, of "a brisk bold lass, provokingly well versed in the water language," hovering round one of those periodical expeditions which took George the Second to Hanover at frequent intervals during his reign, and making the court officials, who were awaiting their royal master below bridge, stare and gasp at the vigour of her communications. A journalist of the day describes this lady's criticism as a series of "plaguy broadsides," and "odd, comical, out-of-the-way expressions," which he forbore to repeat, because he questioned "whether they would not even be deemed treasonable." If, as is probable, the "brisk bold lass" knew of some of the attractions which drew King George to Hanover, and spoke her mind freely on the subject, it was no doubt advisable, as the writer in the *Medley* said, "that the phrases she made use of should not be repeated here."

The Thames of those early days, with its wonderfully picturesque front, which one sees best in the delightful pictures of Scott, seems, as we say, to have been handed over altogether to ribaldry. The *Folly*, the only floating place of entertainment of which there is record, a large hulk moored off Somerset House in the days of the Restoration, and fitted up as a musical summer-house for the entertainment of the quality, sank from a resort of the fashionables "to a receptacle for companies of loose and disorderly people for the purposes of drinking and promiscuous dancing."

Even the easy morals of the times of George the Second could not tolerate the *Folly*, and put an end to its pleasantries. And so we find that the Thames has never taken the fancy of the more reputable classes of Londoners as a playground, and its pleasures have been confined to the not very exciting occasions when the Lord Mayor went up the stream in his gilded barge, to an occasional pageant like the Ranelagh Regatta of 1775, or to the more interesting contest between young watermen initiated by the benevolence of the eminent comedian Mr. Doggett in 1728, and still happily an annual fixture. On the 1st of August of every year since, six young watermen just out of their articles row the course from Old Swan Pier at London Bridge to the Swan at Chelsea, for the orange-coloured coat, the silver badge, and a prize in money, which has been much increased in later times by donations from the City Companies.

The regatta of 1775 has an interest as the first of such functions in this country, and was in itself a notable spectacle. There were certain ingenious arrangements made to secure its success which have never been imitated since. For example, the actual day was left dependent upon the weather, and was announced by the flying of a red flag from Westminster Bridge, and by the continuous ringing of the bells of St. Margaret's from ten till one. The proceedings did not begin until six in the evening. An incredible number of private boats then assembled at Westminster Bridge, each with its four rowers dressed

in one of the national colours. The reds assembled in and about the four arches of the Middlesex side of the bridge, the blues in those of the Surrey shore, while the whites occupied the middle of the stream, leaving only the central arch free. Through this arch shot a number of watermen's wherries on a race to London Bridge and back, for which prizes of some value were given. Upon the conclusion of this race the whole flotilla moved up the river to Ranelagh at Chelsea. The Lord Mayor and the City Companies were present in state. There was a prodigious saluting of cannon, fine music, and an execrable supper at Ranelagh Gardens, provided by Mrs. Cornelys at a cost of 700 guineas, "the wine being very scarce," as we learn. But the London of 1775 was on the whole much impressed, and the reporters were eloquent upon the splendours of the festival. "The ballast the city barges were used to take in," writes one of them, "was on this occasion filled with the finest ballast in the world, above one hundred elegant ladies, and it is thought that the procession was seen by at least 200,000 people."

Later in the century, the regatta of 1775 suggested certain races for prizes given for sailing-boats by the proprietors of Vauxhall, and out of those simple meetings grew the whole vast system of yacht racing and regattas which we know to-day as a great feature of modern England. It is not uninteresting to recall such modest beginnings of a great national pastime, but one turns from the scanty records of the Thames

with the conviction that London has from the first neglected its possibilities as a place of diversion.

Could the taste of Londoners for horrors, the interest in suffering which appeared in half their sports and amusements, be better displayed than in the records of their delight in the exhibitions of Tyburn and Tower Hill? We believe that no spectacle of the last century, no coronation, no triumphal progress of captured standards to St. Paul's, or treasure to the Mint during the first Mr. Pitt's great war, ever drew such crowds into the streets as when Balmerino and Kilmarnock went to Tower Hill, or Lord Ferrers or Dr. Dodd, Jack Sheppard or John Rann, made the long and doleful journey from Newgate to Tyburn, the threefold gibbet which stood in fields opposite the present Marble Arch, somewhere very near the present Connaught Square. When the criminal was notorious, or distinguished, or pitied, or execrated above the common, his agony was prolonged by crowds in such numbers as lengthened the passage through the streets by hours. The space of time which lay between the stroke of the bell at midnight under the condemned man's cell window in Newgate Gaol and the claiming of his body by his friends, or by the surgeons for dissection, as his luck might determine, was a time of revel and merrymaking for his fellow-citizens.

It was doubtless a pious and worthy motive that inspired Mr. Robert Dowe in 1605 to give £50 "for ringing the greatest bell in the church (St. Sepulchre's)

on the day the condemned prisoners are executed, and for other services for ever, for which services the sexton is paid £1, 6s. 8d." In fulfilment of other conditions of the bequest, the beadle of the same church was accustomed to go under the condemned cell at Newgate as twelve o'clock struck on the night preceding the execution with a handbell, lest the prisoners should be asleep, and administer some very good advice, conveyed however in indifferent verse ending,

"And when St. 'Pulchre's bell to-morrow tolls,
The Lord above have mercy on your souls;
Past twelve o'clock."

Thus were the last hours of these poor wretches punctuated by that well-meaning busybody Mr. Dowe, "citizen and merchant taylor of London." The ceremony included also a pious exhortation, "affectingly good," as Mr. Pennant describes it, as the procession turned out of the Old Bailey and came to St. Sepulchre's Churchyard. The great bell tolled as the beadle droned out, "All good people, pray heartily unto God for these poor sinners who are now going to their death, for whom this great bell doth toll."

If the victim were a highwayman, and as such a favourite of the ladies, the cart would stop at the steps of the church. Jack Sheppard say, or Jack Rann, who robbed "the Reverend Mr. Bell of his watch and eighteenpence in money in Gunnersbury

Lane on the road to Brentford," would be in the cart, with his coffin and the chaplain on either side of him. Jack would be dressed in a pea-green coat, with knee breeches of white Nankin tied with ribbons at the knee, and the cart, as we say, would stop at the church and a girl would come down with a nosegay which Jack would receive and wear dolefully all the way to Tyburn. The parson would pray all the time, but there would be much badinage between Jack and the crowd, as the equipage moved on, slowly by reason of the great crush, under windows crowded as if for a royal procession. Jack, in Dr. Swift's pleasant lines,

"while the rabble was bawling,
Rode stately through Holborn to die at his calling.
He stopped at the George for a bottle of sack
And promised to pay for it when he came back.
His waistcoat and stockings and breeches were white,
His cap had a new cherry ribbon to tie't;
And the maids to the doors and the balconies ran
And cried, 'Lack-a-day, what a proper young man.'"

When the whole sorry procession at last came in sight of the gallows at Tyburn, a triangle of beams with a pillar at each corner which gave accommodation on a generous scale, the fields were seen to be occupied by a great crowd of people numbering many thousands. There would be all the fun of a fair going on in those fields; oranges and gingerbread would be on sale and copies of Jack's last dying speech and confession, and the hangman would be sitting astride one of the beams with a pipe in his mouth. It was one

of the pleasantries of the occasion for gangs of blackguards to dig holes in the ground, cover them with grass, and watch people fall into them. There would be front seats, too, reserved at half a crown, for those who wished to see Jack's last moments to the best advantage. We are shown the whole thing perfectly in Mr. Hogarth's last plate of the "Life and Adventures of Tom Idle." The cart would then drive up very slowly through the crowd and pass under one of the beams of the gallows, where the hangman would fit Jack's neck with a noose. There would follow a long or short delay, according as Jack was of a hesitating nature or able to make up his mind bravely to get it all over. In the former case he would pray at such prodigious length that the crowd would jeer him and protest that it was time for him to be turned off. Sometimes the parson would do most of the praying, and there might be some diversion, as when the eminent Mr. Jonathan Wild stole a corkscrew from the divine's pocket and died with it in his hand. Jack would have a handkerchief in his fingers, and the dropping of that handkerchief was the signal for which the hangman and the crowd waited. However long-winded Jack might be, he must drop that fateful linen at last, and then, unless it fluttered out of the cart, in which case the hangman held on for a moment to recover it as a valuable relic, the cart was driven on, and Jack was left dangling in the air.

The drop provided for these poor victims was of the shortest, and their death was usually that of suffo-

cation. So well was this understood that their friends would bribe the hangman to hasten their relief by hanging to their legs or punching them on the chest to expel the last breath. These were incidents of the show. The pious offices of relatives were also at times exerted in attempts at resuscitation, often, it is declared, with success, for there was no dislocated neck to be adjusted. There were, indeed, numerous moments of interest to finish the great holiday of an execution. The friends would find themselves obliged to chaffer with Jack Ketch for the clothes of the deceased, as they were a perquisite of that official. Then the rope, when the time came for cutting down, sold at a shilling an inch, no less, for a good ordinary criminal, and at a much higher rate for one of high caste like my Lord Ferrers, who suffered from his own chariot in a cord of silk. The saturnalia were often ended by a riot over the body. When they turned off Jack Sheppard in 1724, his friends brought a hearse to take him back to St. Sepulchre's for decent burial. The mob believed, or affected the belief, that this was a mere ruse of the surgeons to get possession of this noted corpse for dissection. They attacked the cortege therefore, broke the hearse in pieces, and half killed the mutes and other functionaries. The body, as we learn, "was passed from hand to hand from Tyburn to Long Acre, where it at length found rest at the Barley Mow public-house." The mob now discovered that they had been acting all along under the leadership of a bailiff who was in truth the agent of the

surgeons, and that the funeral procession they had so despitefully used was, indeed, a pious function of Mr. Sheppard's sorrowing relatives. At this their fury blazed afresh, the police were powerless and sent for the troops, and Jack at last found burial at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields under escort of his Majesty's Guards.

Such were some of the incidents of a public execution at Tyburn, an occasion for holiday-making and diversion, to be present at which people took great pains and upon which they set great store, and these not necessarily the low and debased. We know that an exquisite like George Selwyn never missed an execution if he could help it, and when they turned off Jack Rann in 1774, Mr. Nollekens, the eminent sculptor, led that interesting gossip, Mr. J. T. Smith, then a child, to the end of John Street to see Jack go by in his pea-green coat. "On our return home," records Mr. Smith, "Mr. Nollekens, stooping close to my ear, assured me that had his father-in-law, Mr. Justice Welsh, been high constable we could have walked all the way to Tyburn by the side of the cart," so great were the privileges of high station in those days.

It was the taste which could find amusement in the execution that we may suppose kept alive some of those minor sports, the cock-shy, the duck hunt, and the rat pit which diverted the Sunday mornings of great numbers of citizens from the days of William the Third to those of George the Fourth. The cock-shy or cock-throwing, to be sure, was only an annual feast celebrated on Shrove Tuesday, like the eating of

pancakes. An ingenuous Frenchman, indeed, associated the two ceremonials with each other. "The English," said he, "eat a certain cake on Shrove Tuesday, upon which they immediately run mad and kill their poor cocks." There was some justification, it must be confessed, for this excellent foreigner's conjecture. On that holy day you might see, in all open parts of the town, cocks or hens tied by the leg, their owners offering sticks at twopence a throw at a range of a chain, or twenty-two yards, just, in fact, as one used to throw at cocoa-nuts at a country fair. The cock had a certain length of string in which to manœuvre, and his master had trained him to avoid the knock over, which made him the property of his assailant, as long as possible, and so to earn many twopences. As a variation the birds were often hung across the street in an earthen pot, their head and tails being alone exposed. A successful throw broke the shard and released the bird, which brought whatever value it possessed after such battery to its tormentor. It was reckoned humorous at times to put an owl in the pot disguised as a cock, which, upon the breaking of the shell, flew away. That this sport was a recognised diversion of the town is plain from a paragraph taken from a news-sheet of 1700 by Malcolm: "Last Tuesday a brewer's servant in Southwark took his walk round Tower Hill, Moorfields, and Lincoln's Inn Fields, and knocked down so many cocks that by selling them again he returned home some twenty-eight shillings and eightpence richer than he came out."

The joys of the duck hunt were not confined to a day or a season, but filled a score of tavern gardens which contained the necessary pond throughout the Sundays of the year with the devotees of the fancy. There was a famous establishment on the site of what is now the eligible Hertford Street, Mayfair, called the Dog and Duck. Another noted establishment with the same title, was that which the building of the Bethlehem Hospital extinguished. The sign of a spaniel with a duck in his mouth, wrought in stone, may still be seen built in the wall of the garden of that institution. Jenny's Whim was a noted tavern which occupied the site of the present St. George's Row in the Ebury Bridge Road, famous for its duck-hunting and Dorchester ale. It was at Jenny's Whim that Lord Granby got so drunk before joining Mr. Horace Walpole's party at Vauxhall, as we saw in another chapter. There were favourite ducking-ponds at Halfpenny Hatch, Rotherhithe, at Islington Green, at White's Conduit House, and in the East Lane, Islington, where the New River reservoirs were afterwards made, and at many other places too no doubt. The proceedings at all were the same, and leave us in wonder at the attraction of the sport for human creatures.

The ducking-pond was a small affair, and boarded to the height of the knee round its edges to prevent the excited spectators from falling in in their eagerness to follow the incidents of the sport. These all arose from the movements of a pinioned duck which

was put into the water and hunted by a spaniel or spaniels. "It escaped," we are told, "as long as it was able by diving." There were variations upon the simplicity of this sport. "Sometimes the duck is tormented in a different manner," records Malcolm, "without the assistance of dogs, by having an owl tied upon her back and so put into the water, where she frequently dives in order to escape from the burden, and on her return for air the miserable owl, half drowned, shakes itself, and hooting, frightens the duck. She, of course, dives again, and replunges the owl under the water. The frequent repetition of this action soon deprives the poor bird of its sensations, and generally ends in its death, if not in that of the duck also."

The taste for the hideous brutality of duck-hunting came to an end in the early years of the present century. It was from no softening of the characters of its patrons, we are told, that it expired, but only because an expanding town drained its ponds and built over the gardens where they were maintained. The present devotees of pigeon-shooting may trace back the beginnings of their sport to the institution of the ducking-pond. It was the sportsmen who found their Sunday mornings deranged by the disappearance of the ducking-pond who invented the pigeon match, a diversion which some consider not unworthy of its origin.

Of the amusements of our ancestors in London which we have examined in our inquiry, how many

have survived to our own times? Practically one, and one only, the theatre, which to-day perhaps fills a greater place than ever amongst the diversions of the town. We hold it impossible to make any valuable comparison between living actors and those of a former age, but it may be contended for the theatre that it has shown a continual development as an organisation of pleasure since the days of Killigrew and Davenant. The other pleasures of the London of the past have, almost without exception, been discarded, or absorbed and translated. The Parks, of course, remain, but they are no longer the playground of fashion which London made of them in the days of the Ring or the Mall. The tea gardens and Vauxhall were features of the London of other days, which all who have studied their old delights must regret; in other respects, the amusements of the town of Queen Victoria are surely a change for the better upon those of all her predecessors. We may congratulate ourselves upon the change in taste and manners which has rendered the excesses of the play tables impossible in these days. No one regrets the disappearance of Hockley in the Hole, or the closing of cockpits and prize-rings. Whatever faint survivals of the masquerade may still linger at Covent Garden are a certain improvement upon the diversions which went on at the Haymarket or at Soho Square. The great fairs, we believe, were, on the whole, innocent occasions of enjoyment, but their attractions are be seen in a developed form to-day at the music

halls, and that continuously and without an enervating revel of weeks in the hottest time of the year. Speaking generally, Londoners of all ranks have exchanged most of their former joys for diversions in which bodily exercise takes a chief part; the man who formerly lost his fortune at hazard or faro at White's or Brooks's now spends it in healthy forms of sport which take him over the country, and, indeed, over the globe for its gratification. Men of a lower station play cricket and football or ride bicycles when they are young, and look on at others doing the same when age overtakes them. And London and England have surely gained by the change.

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